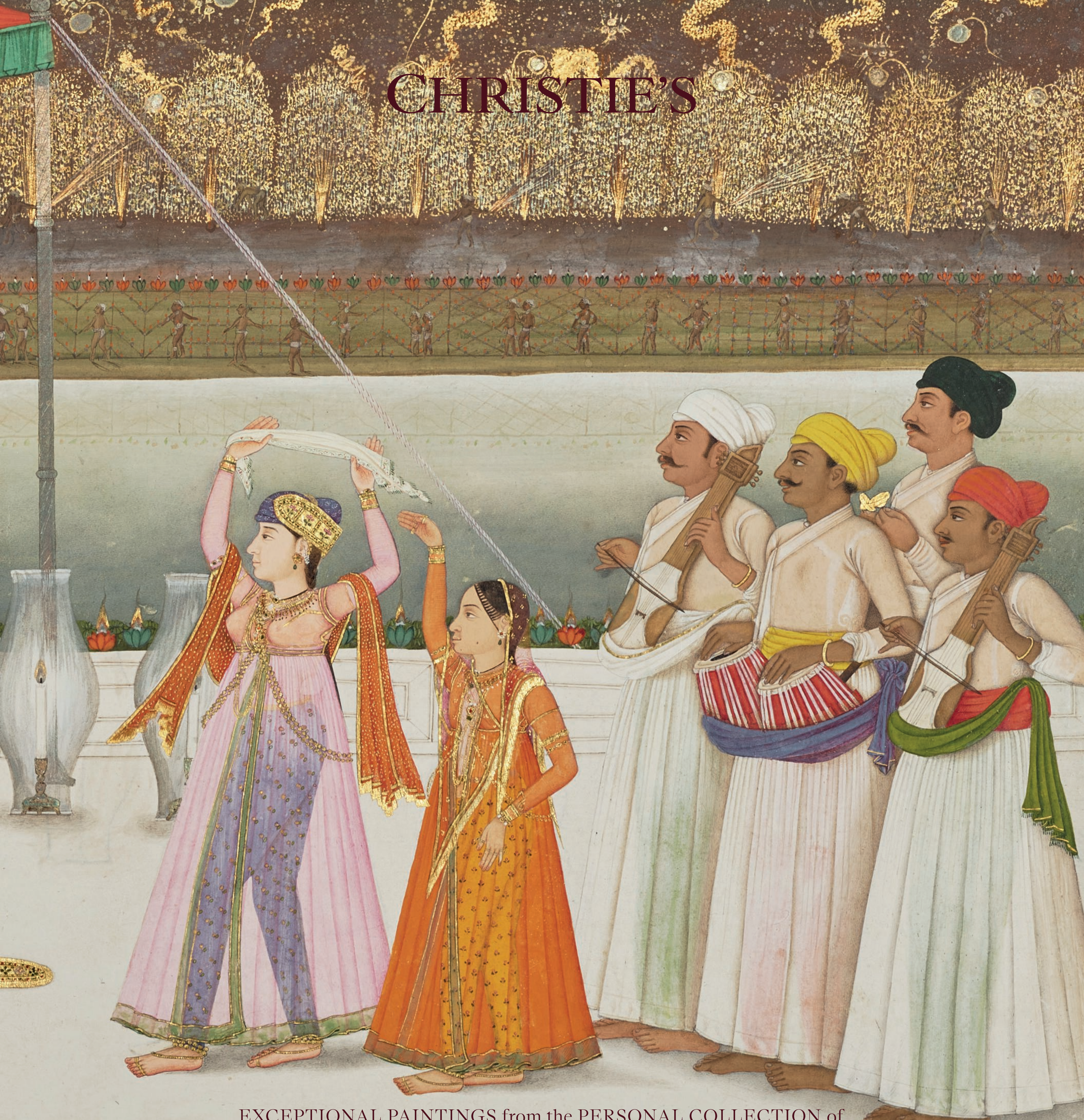
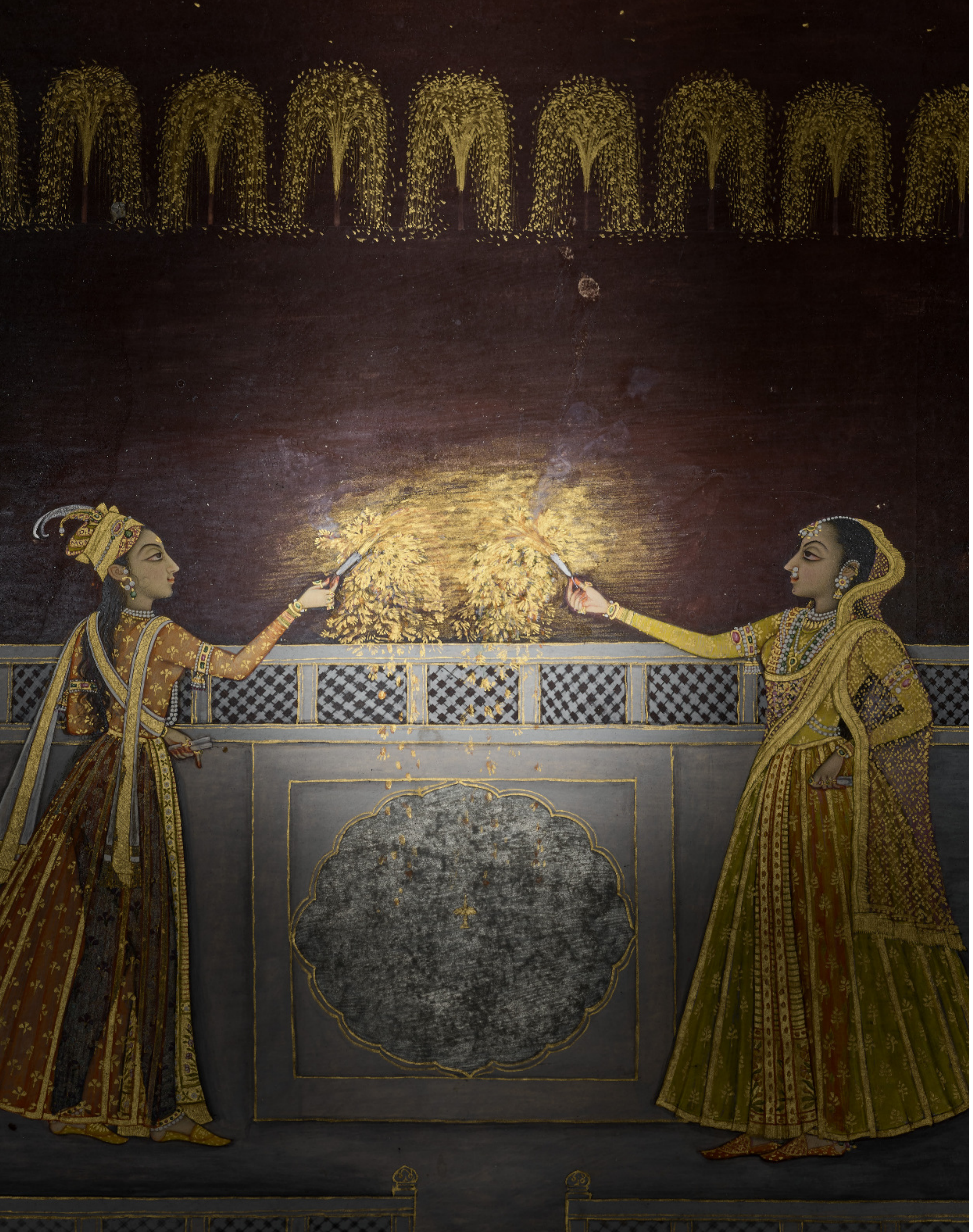
CHRISTIE'S



EXCEPTIONAL PAINTINGS from the PERSONAL COLLECTION of

PRINCE & PRINCESS
SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN

LONDON | 28 OCTOBER 2025



EXCEPTIONAL PAINTINGS from the PERSONAL COLLECTION of

PRINCE & PRINCESS
SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN

AUCTION

Tuesday 28 October 2025 at 11.00 am

8 King Street, St. James's
London SW1Y 6QT

VIEWING

Friday	24 October	9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Saturday	25 October	12.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Sunday	26 October	12.00 pm - 5.00 pm
Monday	27 October	9.00 am - 5.00 pm

AUCTIONEER

Rahul Kadakia

AUCTION CODE AND NUMBER

In sending absentee bids or making enquiries, this sale should be referred to as **TULIP-23877**

ABSENTEE AND TELEPHONE BIDS

Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2658
Fax: +44 (0)20 7930 8870

CONDITIONS OF SALE

The sale of each lot is subject to the Conditions of Sale, Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice, which are set out in this catalogue and on christies.com. Please note that the symbols and cataloguing for some lots may change before the auction.
For the most up to date sale information for a lot, please see the full lot description, which can be accessed through the sale landing page on christies.com.

BUYER'S PREMIUM

In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol.
Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.

Principal Auctioneer: Adrien Meyer

Please scan for complete auction information

CHRISTIE'S

SPECIALISTS AND SERVICES FOR THIS AUCTION

Sara Plumbly
Head of Department
Islamic and Indian Art
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2374

Edward Wilkinson
Global Head of Classical Indian,
Himalayan,
and Southeast Asian Art
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2302

Barney Bartlett
Junior Specialist
Islamic and Indian Art
Tel: +44 (0)20 7752 3171

Archie Williams
Junior Specialist
Islamic and Indian Art,
Rugs & Carpets
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2417

Phoebe Jowett Smith
Sale Coordinator & Cataloguer
Islamic and Indian Art,
Rugs & Carpets
Tel: +44 (0)20 7752 3221

Emilie Frontera
Head of Sale Management
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2029

Ben Wiggins
Regional Managing Director
Tel: +44 20 7389 2288

Sonal Singh
Chairman, India
Tel: +91 222 280 7905

SPECIALISTS

Sara Plumbly
Edward Wilkinson
Barney Bartlett
Archie Williams
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2509
Fax: +44 (0)20 7389 2326

SALE COORDINATOR
Phoebe Jowett Smith
Tel: +44 (0)20 7752 3221

REGIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR
Ben Wiggins
Tel: +44 20 7389 2288

SERVICES

ABSENTEE AND TELEPHONE BIDS
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2658
Fax: +44 (0)20 7930 8870
Internet: www.christies.com

AUCTION RESULTS
UK: +44 (0)20 7839 9060
Internet: www.christies.com

CATALOGUES ONLINE
Lotfinder®
Internet: www.christies.com

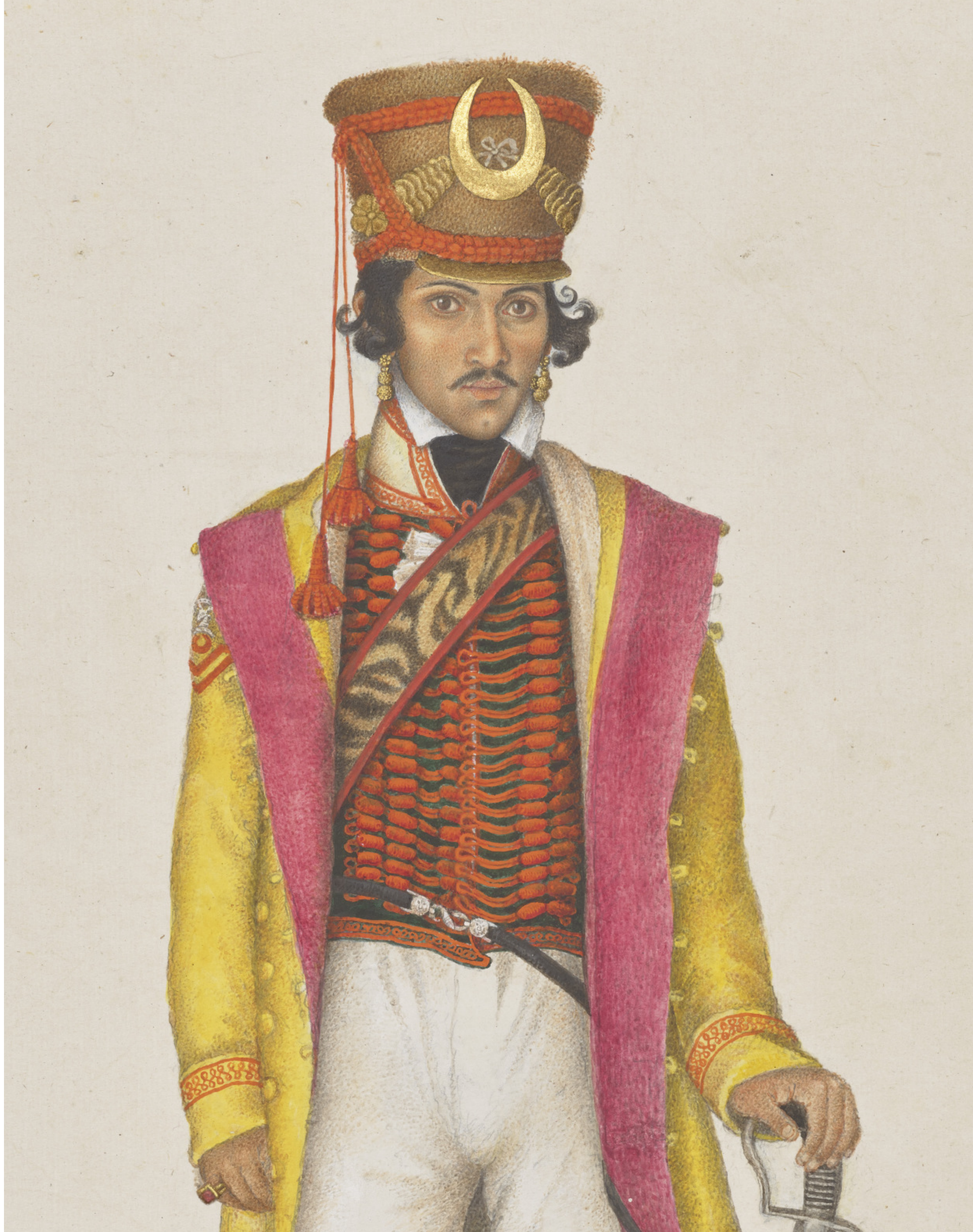
CLIENT SERVICES
Tel: +44 (0)20 7839 9060
Fax: +44 (0)20 7389 2869
Email : info@christies.com

POST-SALE SERVICES
Miranda Achille
Post-Sale Coordinator
Payment, Shipping, and Collection
Tel: +44 (0)20 7752 3200
Fax: +44 (0)20 7752 3300
Email:
PostSaleUK@christies.com

EMAIL
First initial followed by last name@ christies.com
(e.g. Phoebe Jowett Smith = pjowettsmith@christies.com)
For general enquiries about this auction, emails should be addressed to the Sale Coordinator.

With special thanks to Neha Abid Sayeed

Notice for buyers wishing to import certain lots into the EU: Certain lots in this sale may be impacted by the new licensing requirements and regulations relating to the import of "cultural goods" into the EU (Regulation (EU) 2019/880 and its Implementing Regulation 2021/1079). We recommend clients check before bidding whether the lot they wish to bid on is subject to these regulations. Please contact Phoebe Jowett Smith (pjowettsmith@christies.com) and see H2 of our Conditions of Sale for more information.



These wonderful paintings are full of happy memories. They hung in our home at Bellerive and were a source of great beauty and joy in our lives. Their placement in the various rooms of the chateau was carefully arranged in harmony with the artistic approach to the interiors, which had been guided by the great French designer Henri Samuel.

Over the years we came to appreciate them more and more. Although we saw them every day, their beauty, artistic spirit and history was always inspiring. There were constantly new and interesting details that became apparent, often prompted by conversations with family, friends and visitors who came to our home.

Many of the paintings were bought by Sadri and I as gifts to each other, or by my children for both of us. One example is the wonderful portrait of Pearee Jan from the Fraser Album, which I gave to my husband in 1980. Another is the beautiful and enchanting Deccani scene of animals and holy men in a landscape, which my husband gave me in 1982. As soon as he saw it he knew it was a painting I would adore, and it became one of my favourites.

Now the time has come to pass these treasured works of art on to a new generation of collectors, and I hope they will continue to give as much joy to others as they have to us.

PRINCESS CATHERINE AGA KHAN

FOREWORD

As a friend, and one of countless admirers, I bear witness to the phenomenal partnership of Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine Aga Khan, as they brought transformative changes to innumerable lives.

Prince Sadruddin was a devoted United Nations diplomat who spent his life advocating for humanitarian causes, especially for refugees. Alongside Princess Catherine, he championed the preservation of natural and cultural treasures long before these issues gained widespread recognition.

Beyond their philanthropic endeavors, they are also celebrated as distinguished art connoisseurs. *Exceptional Paintings from the Personal Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan* features ninety-five exquisite works of impeccable provenance, gathered and treasured by the Prince and Princess over decades. It is a remarkable assemblage of historically important Islamic and Indian Art, carefully curated by them, which elegantly adorned the walls of their home, Château de Bellerive, on the picturesque shores of Lake Geneva.

The range of subjects, artists, and styles is remarkably diverse. Some are refined and delicate, while others are bold and powerful, all exuding allure with a distinctly journalistic quality. Each is unique and rare, and each radiates beauty and significance that transcends the confines of the frames. They all invite exploration, effortlessly drawing viewers into an enchanted parallel universe where art and history intertwine, sparking wonder and reflection.

Christie's is truly honored to showcase this extraordinary collection to the art lovers of the world.

FRANCOIS CURIEL, CHAIRMAN CHRISTIE'S EUROPE

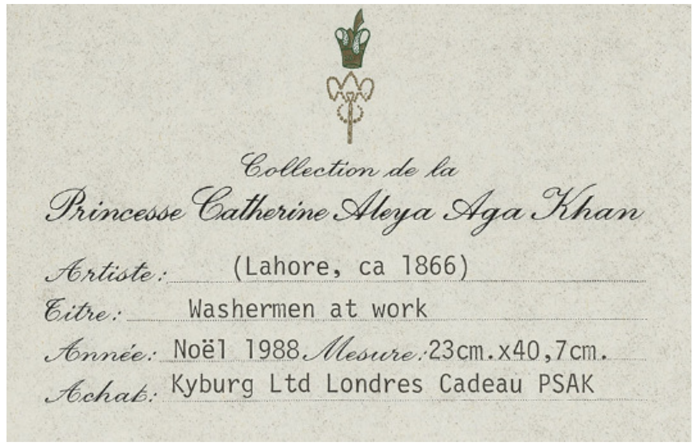
Château de Bellerive

INTRODUCTION

The works of art in this catalogue represent an extraordinary collection, truly remarkable for the quality, beauty and historical significance of the works of art and as a reflection of two remarkable lives, those of the late Prince Sadruddin (1933-2003) and Princess Catherine Aga Khan. It is a deeply personal collection – many of the pieces were bought as gifts to each other – and it reflects their shared vision, their deep interest in art and cultural history and their impeccable aesthetic discernment. The ninety-five works presented here include many well-known masterpieces, several of which have become iconic in the fields of Indian and Persian painting and acknowledged as pivotal works in the art history of the region. There are also lesser-known pieces, some previously unpublished, and these augment our understanding of the breadth and depth of Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine's aesthetic curiosity and love for Indian and Persian art.

In the foreword to the catalogue of the 1998 exhibition *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan traced the origins of his interest in the arts of the Islamic World to his childhood, when he was fascinated by the books and manuscripts in his parents' library, much of which had been inherited from his grandmother, a descendant of Fath Ali Shah Qajar. As he grew up, he visited major museums, where experts such as K. A. C. Creswell guided him through the Islamic collections and enlightened him about the fascinating complexities of the field. His interest in and engagement with Islamic and Indian art deepened greatly while a student at Harvard University in the early 1950s. Sharing a house with the grandsons of Henri Matisse and James Joyce, and the founders of the *Paris Review*, George Plimpton and John Train, he attended lectures by scholars such as Sir Hamilton Gibb and Philip Hitti and the museum curator Eric Schroeder. He also met Stuart Cary Welch, the well-known scholar-collector who had recently completed his studies in Fine and Classical Arts and was immersing himself in the arts of the Islamic World and India. Cary Welch became a friend, guide and mentor to Prince Sadruddin in his collecting, a role he continued to play throughout the following decades. While at Harvard and in the years following, Prince Sadruddin would often visit the New York galleries of the Minassians, H. Khan Monif and others, and soon began purchasing from auctions and galleries in London, Paris and elsewhere.

The great majority of the ninety-five works in this catalogue were acquired between the 1960s and the 1980s, a period when a wealth of important material was available on the market from the great collections of the nineteenth and twentieth century. The list of former collections represented in these ninety-five lots is superlative and includes those of Colonel Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier (1741-1795), John Wombwell (1748-1813), John and William Dent (c. 1776-96), Colonel James Skinner (1778-1841), William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856), the 2nd Earl of Caledon (1777-1839), Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), Major Rohde Hawkins (1821-1884), Baron Maurice de Rothschild (1881-1957), Octave Homberg (1876-1941), F. R. Martin (1868-1933), M. H. Sevadjian (1884-1933), A. C. Ardeshir (1885-1960), Hagop Kevorkian (1872-1962), E. Beghian (1877-1962), Dr. W. B. Manley (1885-1972), W. G. Archer (1907-1979), and Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008). The names of the artists represented in this collection include many great masters of Indian and Persian painting, such as Mirza Ali, Shaykh Muhammad, Sadiqi Beg, Reza Abbasi, Muhammad Qasim, Mu'in Musavvir, Muhammad Baqir, Muhammad Hadi, Levni, Dust Muhammad, Basawan, Muhammad Ali, the family circle of Manaku and Nainsukh, Shaykh Taju, Ram Narayan, Mohan Lal, Mihr Chand, Sewak Ram, Ghulam Ali Khan, the Master of the Fraser Album, Lalji, Muhammad Amir of Karraya and Bishan Singh.

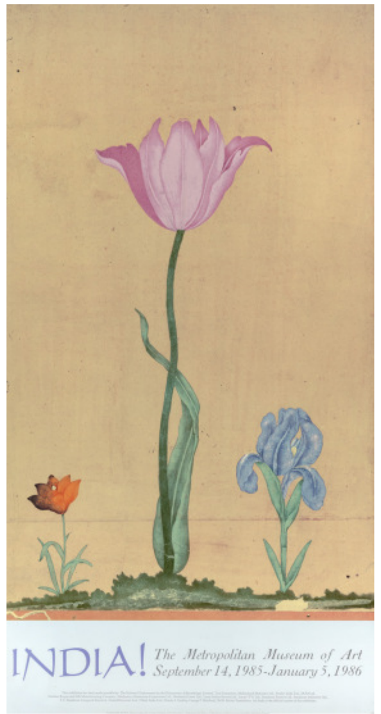


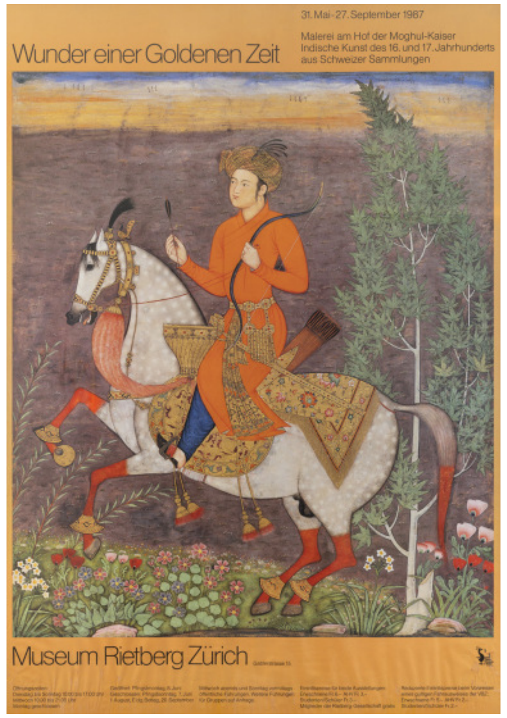
Collection de la
Princesse Catherine Aleya Aga Khan
Artiste: (Lahore, ca 1866)
Titre: Washermen at work
Année: Noël 1988 Mesure: 23cm.x40,7cm.
Achat: Kyburg Ltd Londres Cadeau PSAK

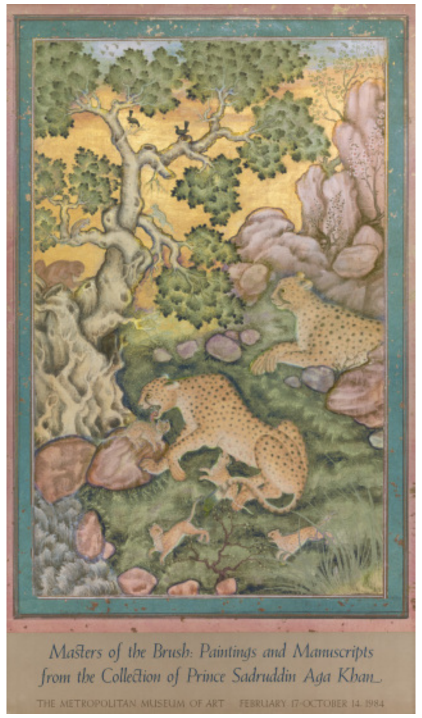
In 1972 Prince Sadruddin married Princess Catherine and over the following years they filled their home at Chateau de Bellerive on the shores of Lake Geneva with an eclectic, sophisticated and culturally wide-ranging collection. Medieval tapestries rubbed shoulders with Bukhara *suzanis*, antique and modernist furniture with Ottoman inlaid tables and Vizagapatam cabinets, Chinese porcelain with Meissen figures, sketches by Klimt, Dufy, Picasso and Tinguely with paintings by Sir Alfred Munnings. Many of these pieces were sold in two auctions held at Christie's, Paris, in 2020. Amongst these treasures from around the world, the growing collection of Islamic and Indian paintings was given pride of place, and, guided by the great French designer Henri Samuel (1904-1996), was elegantly displayed throughout the chateau.

In the late 1960s three important Safavid works had been acquired – the two paintings by Reza Abbasi (lots 77 and 78) and the portrait (possibly a self-portrait) by Muhammad Qasim (lot 81). In the 1970s the collection began to grow significantly, and the year of Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine's marriage was an auspicious one for the collection, for it saw the acquisition of two of the most important and iconic of their Mughal paintings – the seminal *Portrait of Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali* by Dust Muhammad (lot 23), and the ravishing *Tulips and an Iris* (lot 25). Both of these, as well as the Safavid painting of a *Young Woman with a Cat* (lot 82), had been in the Dent family since the late 18th century, unseen for nearly two centuries. Other major works acquired at this period included the captivating *Portrait of John Wombwell* from the Manley Collection (lot 53), the iconic *Colonel Polier's Nautch* by Mihr Chand, from the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps (lot 51), the peerless *Prince Hawking* attributed to Muhammad Ali (lot 28), from the Rothschild Collection, and the mesmerising *Family of Cheetahs* attributed to Basawan (lot 26).

Rooms at Château de Bellerive, designed by Henri Samuel


INDIA!
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
September 14, 1985–January 5, 1986


31. Mai-27. September 1987
Wunder einer Goldenen Zeit
Malerei am Hof der Moghul-Kaiser
Indische Kunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts
aus Schweizer Sammlungen
Museum Rietberg Zürich


Masters of the Brush: Paintings and Manuscripts
from the Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART   FEBRUARY 17-OCTOBER 14, 1984

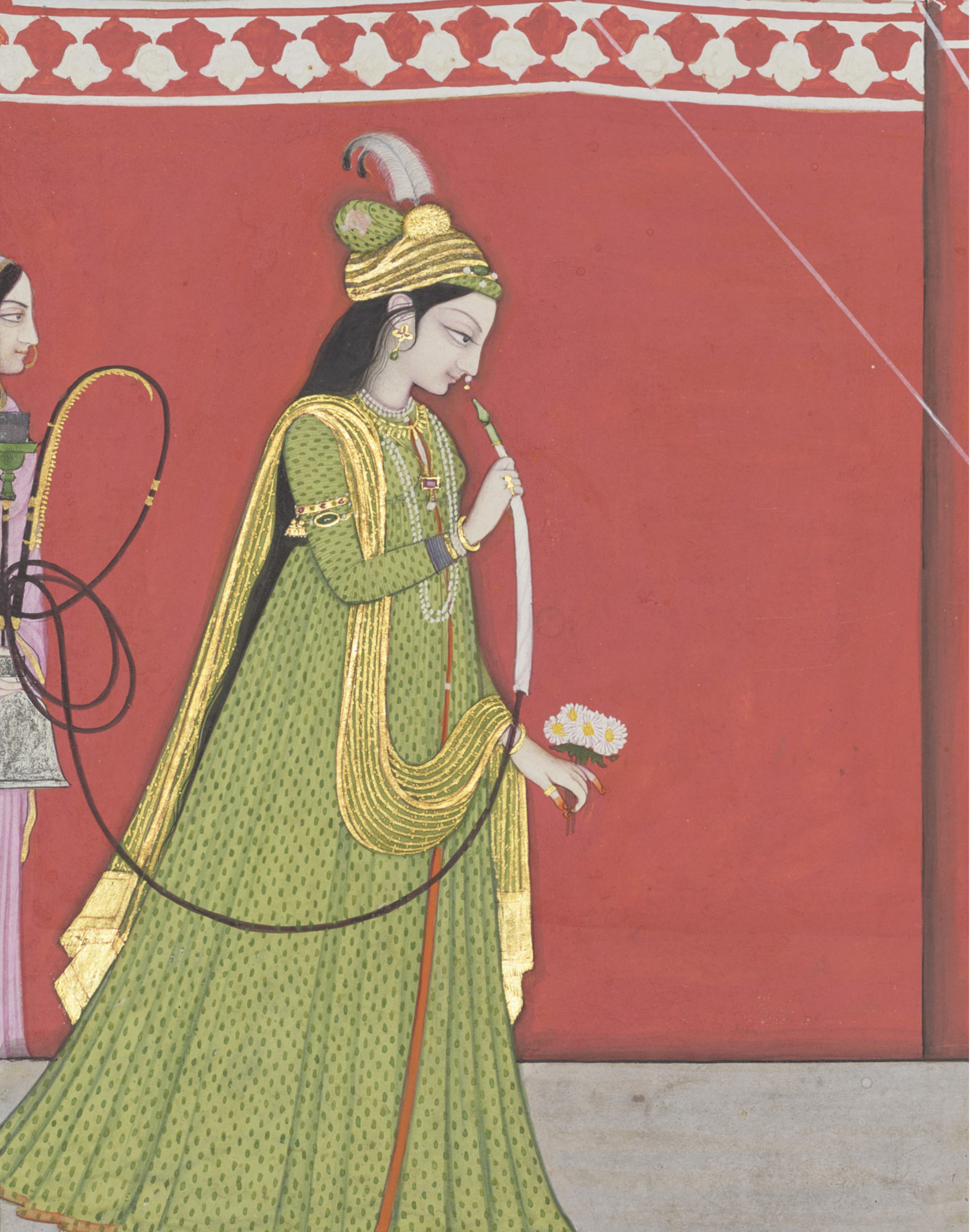
In the late 1970s and 1980s their taste and interests widened further to include paintings from Rajasthan, the Pahari Hills and the Deccan, as well as works from the period of European patronage known as the Company School, a field to which Princess Catherine was particularly drawn. This was again a fruitful time for collecting in these fields, and they were able to acquire superb examples such as the Kotah painting of *Maharao Umed Singh hunting tigers*, by Shaykh Taju (lot 9), one of the greatest examples of its kind, the four exquisite paintings by Pahari masters of the first generation after Manaku and Nainsukh (lots 1, 3-5), as well as the entrancing scene of *Animals and Ascetics in a Landscape* from Golconda in the Deccan (lot 35). This period was particularly fertile for collectors of Company School paintings, a previously overlooked area of Indian art that was brought into glorious relief by scholars such as Mildred Archer and Toby Falk, gallerists such as Giles Eyre, Charles Greig and Niall Hobhouse, and a series of auctions in which masterpieces of this genre were available, many previously hidden away in old family collections. Amongst the sales of that period were two in which were offered the phenomenal Fraser Album, which had been held in the Fraser family archives in Scotland since the early 19th century and was previously unknown. From that album, Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine were able to acquire some of the finest pages (lots 40-47). It is now acknowledged as probably the greatest of all Company School series. Also purchased at this time were two paintings from an important series of illustrations of festivals and ceremonies attributed to Sewak Ram from the collection of the Earls of Caledon (lots 56-57), as well as a monumental painting of the *Diwan-i Khas* by Ghulam Ali Khan (lot 59). One of the last major purchases was the highly important series of illustrations of Kashmiri shawl weaving attributed to the Sikh artist Bishan Singh (lots 63-70), which had been commissioned for the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris and had apparently remained in France until 1987 when they appeared at auction in Paris.

Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine's approach to collecting was harmonious and symbiotic. Their tastes overlapped to a great extent, and yet they also had their own individual tastes and interests that were reflected in the collection. What was entirely shared was a passionate interest in and response to art and culture, especially that of the Islamic and Indian worlds.

The building of their collection occurred alongside Prince Sadruddin's role and responsibilities as an exceptional international diplomat of the highest standing. From the late 1950s he served in a variety of senior cultural and humanitarian roles at UNESCO and the United Nations, culminating in eleven years as the longest-serving High Commissioner for Refugees from 1966 to 1977. He continued to play an important role in humanitarian affairs at the UN for many years thereafter. Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine's union was forged in love and an unwavering commitment to beauty, humanity and the environment, and together they championed the preservation of natural and cultural treasures long before such efforts were recognised as globally urgent. In 1977 they established and funded the Bellerive Foundation, a charitable organisation devoted to environmental, conservation and educational causes in the developing world and Europe. Among the main areas of the Foundation's activities were supporting education in sustainable practices in rural areas of the developing world, highlighting environmental degradation and losses in the Alpine region of Europe, and campaigning for environmental sustainability as well as for ecological welfare and the marine environment. Their advocacy was bold, prescient, and quietly transformative.

Over the decades, many of the works of art in this collection were exhibited in major exhibitions. Dedicated exhibitions of parts of the collection were held in 1982 and 1984 in New York and other cities in the United States (*Arts of the Islamic Book* and *Masters of the Brush*), and in 1998 in London, Harvard, Zurich and Geneva (*Princes, Poets and Paladins*). There have also been many loans of large groups or individual works to important exhibitions such as *Treasures of Islam* (Geneva, 1985), *India!* (New York, 1985), *Akbar's India* (New York, Harvard and Houston, 1985), *Wonders of a Golden Age* (Zurich, 1987), *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux* (Paris, 2003) and more. Among recent examples were major loans to *Forgotten Masters* at the Wallace Collection in London in 2020, an exhibition which focussed on Company School painting.

Due to the art historical importance of the works, many have appeared in scholarly publications, often multiple times. Prominent among these are the dedicated publications by Anthony Welch, Stuart Cary Welch and Sheila Canby, but there are many others, including exhibition catalogues, journal articles, monographs and works on history, architecture and music. In a number of cases, recent research by scholars has revealed important new aspects about the paintings, even among previously well-published works. Examples include nuanced studies on Dust Muhmmad and the *Portrait of Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali*, or in-depth research on the Polier Albums and a thorough study on the artist Mihr Chand which have revealed further levels of significance in the painting of *Colonel Polier's Nautch*. Similarly, research into the activities of the Dutch embassy to Shah Abbas I and the use of specific Safavid portraits as sources for European prints of the 17th century has shed new light on one of the Reza Abbasi portraits. In putting together the present catalogue, Christie's has benefitted greatly from all the publications in which these paintings have appeared over many decades. Due acknowledgement of those publications and their authors is hereby given, especially to Sheila Canby (1949-2025), Anthony Welch (1942-2021), and Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008). In addition, Christie's would also like to thank several current scholars who have assisted in the research for this catalogue and with whose help we have been able to reveal new dimensions to these magnificent paintings that Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine collected over many decades.



***1**

VIPRADLABDHA NAYIKA

ATTRIBUTABLE TO AN ARTIST OF THE FIRST GENERATION AFTER MANAKU AND NAINSUKH, GULER, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-80

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, between blue borders stencilled with gold meandering vine, on margins flecked with green pigment, verso plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 6 x 3¼in. (15.2 x 8.4cm.); folio 10⅝ x 7⅜in. (27 x 18.8cm.)

£50,000-80,000
US$68,000-110,000
€58,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's London, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer,* 14 October 1980, lot 315
P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd, London

EXHIBITED:

Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962, fig.56, p.99
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.126, pp.167-8
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.126 pp.167-8

> “The finest examples of the Guler school, such as the one here, exhibit a sophisticated sense of spatial relationships, a taut, precise use of line and a clean, strong palette”
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**

This poignant painting, attributable to a first-generation artist following the great Manaku and Nainsukh, captures the emotional depth of a *Vipralabdha Nayika*, a heroine deceived or abandoned by her lover. Produced in the late 18th century at Guler, a major centre of Pahari painting under Raja Govardhan Chand (r.1741-73), this work exemplifies the refined lyricism and emotional subtlety that came to define the Guler style.

Set within the grounds of a palace garden, an elegantly dressed woman is shown walking before a rich vermilion tent curtain. Her head bowed and her expression contemplative, she prepares to smoke a hookah. A female attendant closely follows, reinforcing the theme of private, interior emotion within a formally restrained setting. The striking red backdrop, while architecturally plausible as part of a palace tent, also serves as metaphor, a visual partition symbolizing her separation from her absent lover, and by extension, the divine beloved, Krishna.

The *Vipralabdha Nayika*, a figure popularized in Sanskrit and Hindi *rasik* literature, became a favored theme in 18th-century Pahari painting, especially in Guler and Kangra ateliers that were deeply engaged with visualizing poetic sentiment.

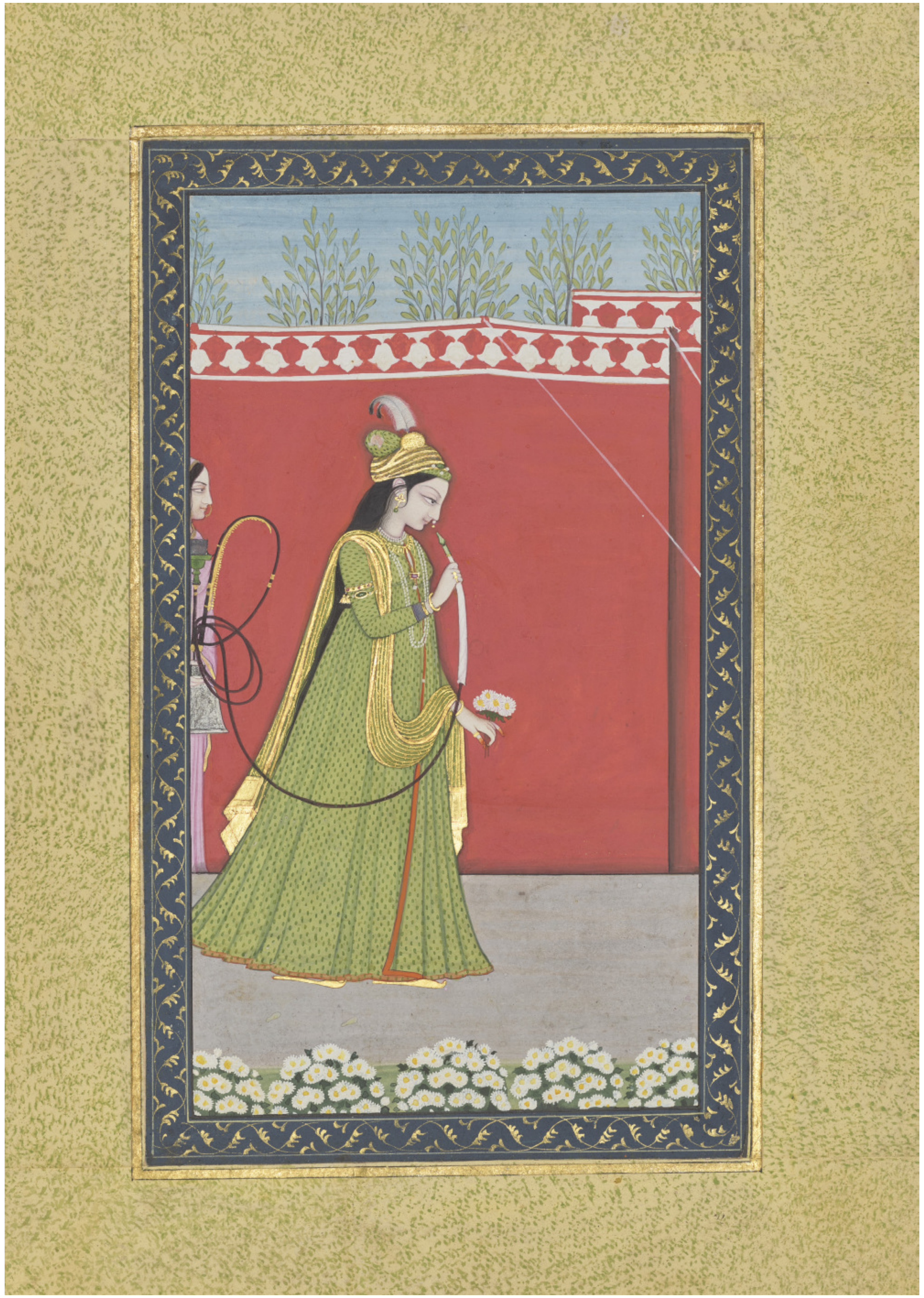
According to B.N. Goswamy, the Guler school was founded in the early 18th century when the master painter Pandit Seu arrived to serve Raja Dilip Singh. His sons, the illustrious Manaku and Nainsukh, refined their father's vision into a highly distinctive style, marked by precise line work, psychological subtlety, and Mughal-influenced naturalism (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 212–77). As their legacy passed to subsequent generations, the style evolved but retained its foundational grace and emotional nuance, as seen here in the tension between stillness and longing.

This painting displays key characteristics of the Guler idiom: a restrained, balanced composition, refined architectural space, and a luminous yet controlled palette. The figure's crisp profile, delicate facial features, and tightly modeled form all speak to the influence of Nainsukh's drawing style. Her shoes, the arrangement of hair strands loose across the ear, and the specific profile of the *huqqa* attendant all closely resemble a related work, *Lovers Strolling by a Pool*, Kangra, ca. 1780, illustrated in Patnaik and Welch, 1985, p.07, no.36.

Other striking visual details, such as the daffodils or daisies held in the heroine's left hand, echoed in the foreground flowerbed, reinforce the sense of symbolic longing. The red tent behind her frames her in a bold chromatic enclosure, heightening her isolation while also highlighting her beauty. A similar use of format and framing can be found in a related later composition of a maiden at her toilet, now in the Indian Museum, Kolkata (Archer 1973, p. 118, no. 68), further suggesting shared atelier practices or pattern drawings.

Of particular interest is the turban she wears, a rare detail for female figures in Pahari painting. It may be read as an intentional act of impersonation or emotional closeness, as if she adopts her absent lover's likeness to conjure his presence and ease her pain.

The *Vipralabdha Nayika* theme allowed Pahari artists to explore the inner emotional states of women, a subject rarely granted such subtlety in earlier Indian painting. This example stands out not only for its technical finesse but also for its empathetic portrayal of longing, marking it as a work of high sophistication in the Guler tradition.



***2**

VIPRALABDHA NAYIKA

NURPUR, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-80

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, within black and red rules, on buff margins, verso with preliminary sketch, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7¾ x 4¾in. (19.8 x 12.1cm.); folio 9 x 6in. (22.8 x 15.2cm.)

£10,000-15,000
US$14,000-20,000
€12,000-17,000

PROVENANCE:
Collection of W.G. Archer (1907-1979), London, before 1976
Doris Wiener Gallery, New York, 1981

EXHIBITED:
Visions of Courtly India, touring exhibition, USA, 1976-8

LITERATURE:
W.G. Archer, *Visions of Courtly India,* London, 1976, no.75, pp.142-3

INSCRIPTIONS:
On the reverse in Devanagari, *nayaka vipralabdha,* 'The Nayika hopelessly waiting for the Nayaka'

Among the many depictions of romantically charged emotions in classical Indian poetry and painting, the *Vipralabdha Nayika*, the heroine who casts off her jewellery in anger stands as one of the most compelling archetypes. In Sanskrit and regional literary traditions, she embodies longing, daring, and often, heartbreak. Courtly norms assumed that such women, impelled by passion, might take the initiative in romantic encounters, leaving the safety of their homes to rendezvous in forests or moonlit groves. A pitch-dark night was often idealized as the proper cover for these trysts; yet here, the heroine dares even the exposure of a full moon.

In this striking painting from the Nurpur school of Pahari painting, dated circa 1770–1780, the *vipralabdha nayika* is portrayed at the height of emotional tension. Clad in a vivid red skirt symbolising passion and a pale yellow bodice tightly bound across her chest, she stands in a clearing beside a solitary tree, the designated meeting spot. She has prepared a makeshift bed of leaves and has waited in vain for her lover's arrival. The bright moon above casts her into full visibility, and the scene's stark exposure mirrors her emotional vulnerability.

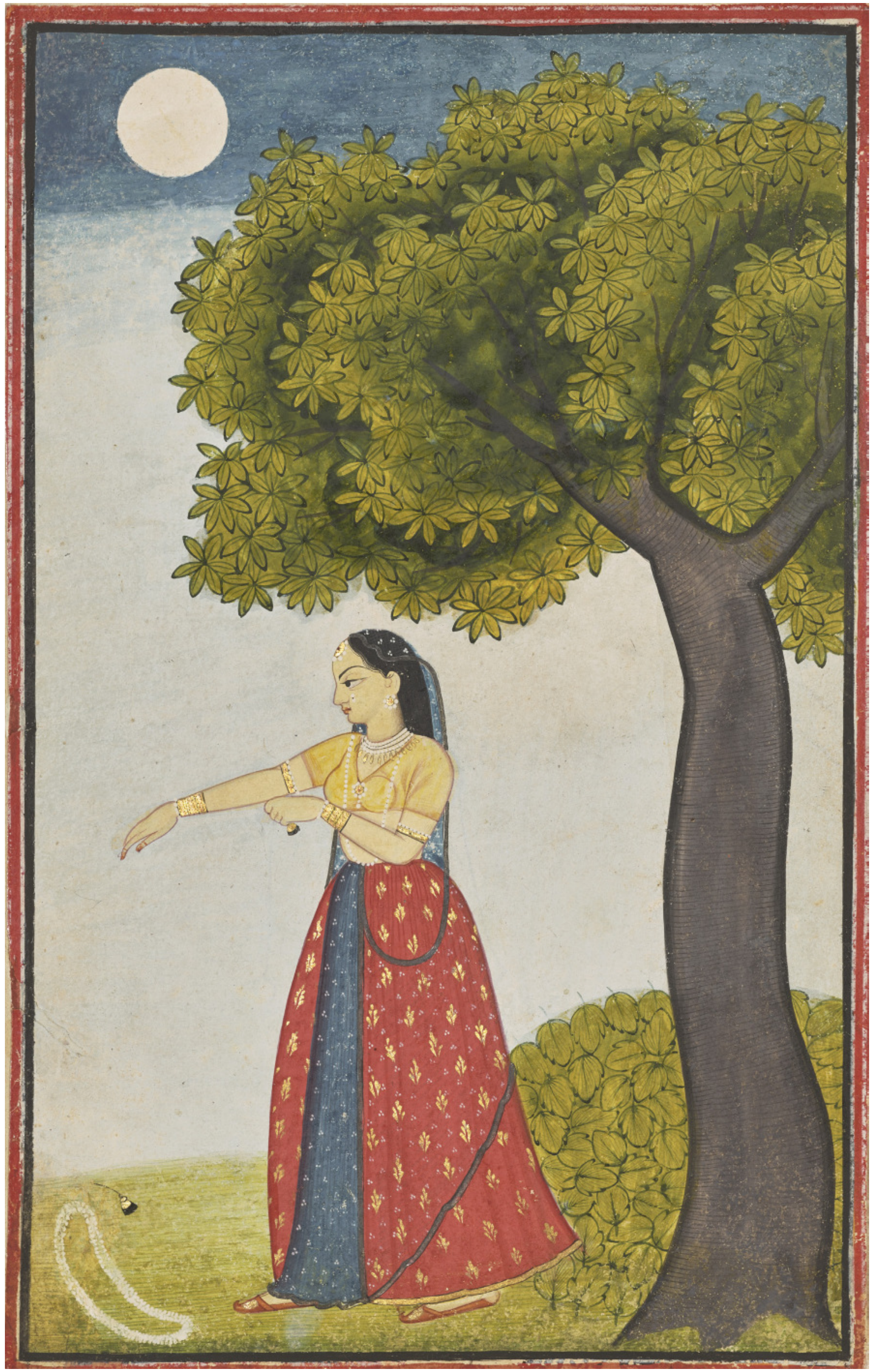
The tree beside her, with its upright, unbending trunk, might be read as a symbolic stand-in for the absent lover, a visual metaphor for steadfastness ironically betrayed by the lover's absence. The heroine's emotion, however, is barely contained. Her face, though seemingly expressionless, bare veils deep anguish. In a poignant gesture of despair and fury, she discards the white flower garland she had intended for her lover and begins to remove her jewelry. A tassel has already fallen to the ground; another is about to follow. These acts of disrobing and discarding ornaments signal the unraveling of her hope and emotional restraint.

This theme was a favourite among Pahari painters, especially those influenced by Rasikapriya and other poetic texts that categorized heroines by their emotional states. Similar depictions of *Vipralabdha Nayika* can be found in the collection of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (Randhawa, 1962, p. 78, fig 45) and another version of the same period from Nurpur is in the San Diego Museum of Art (Archer and Binney, 1968, p. 104, 80a).

This Nurpur rendering, together with another page from the series, *utka nayika* (Archer, 1973, p. 322, no. 56), distinguishes itself through its stark compositional simplicity and emotional clarity. The minimal landscape, dominated by the tree and the open space, draws the viewer's attention entirely to the figure of the heroine, her body language, costume, and gestures forming the crux of narrative drama. It is an exquisite example of how Pahari artists visualized the psyche of a woman caught in the throes of unfulfilled love.

> "She has dared a bright night with a full moon and the trysting place with its solitary tree invites exposure. The stalwart trunk, however, is emblematic of the steadfast lover, and it is only after hours of useless waiting that her patience has snapped. She has now thrown away the garland of white flowers which she intended for her lover's neck. She has begun to strip herself of ornaments. One tassel already lies on the ground and another is about to follow"

W.G. ARCHER



*3

THE *NAYIKA* IN DISTRESS

ATTRIBUTABLE TO AN ARTIST OF THE FIRST GENERATION AFTER MANAKU AND NAINSUKH, GULER, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-80

An illustration to a *Rasikapriya*, opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, the panel with gold spandrels decorated with flowers, in pink-flecked margins, verso plain with old *devanagiri* inventory number, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10¼ x 6⅜in. (26.2 x 16.3cm.); folio 13⅛ x 9⅛in. (33.2 x 23.2cm.)

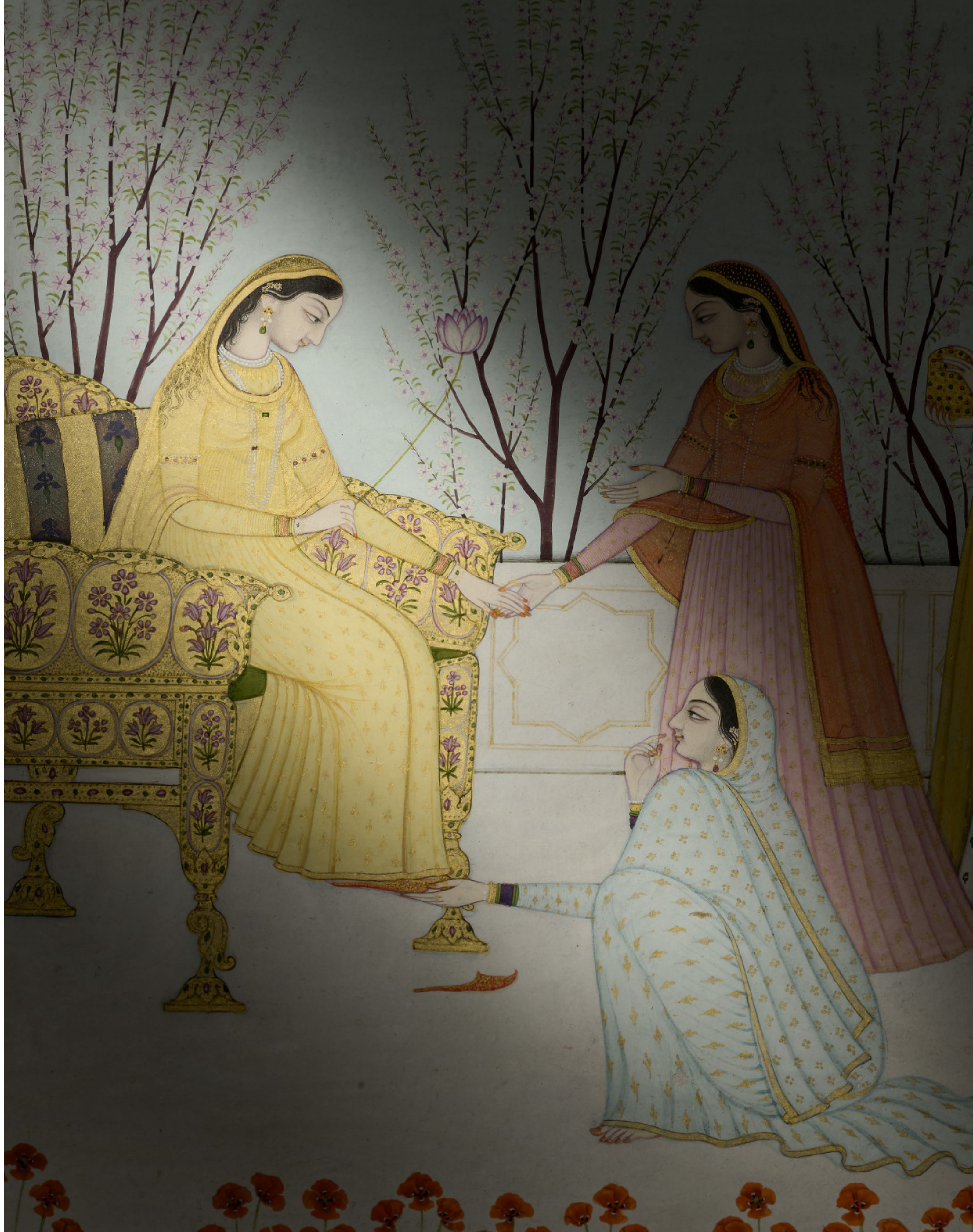
£100,000-150,000
US$140,000-200,000
€120,000-170,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's London, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer,* 7 July 1980, lot 149

LITERATURE:

M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962, figs.60, 66, pp.106, 114
W.G. Archer, *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London and New York, 1973, vol.1, p.52



Within the rich tradition of Punjab Hills painting that celebrates the devotional poetry of the Rasikapriya, this work stands out as a singular achievement. The artist has chosen a rare setting, a moonlit night scene rendered in a restrained blue-grey palette, which heightens the sombre, mist-laden atmosphere surrounding the dejected *nayika*.

The composition depicts a moment of profound emotional tension. The lovers' golden throne, positioned beneath the radiant full moon, is a setting ideal for union, yet only one figure occupies it. The *nayika*, realising her beloved will not come, prepares to step down. She is not alone in her sorrow: she is encircled by several attendants, each urgently engaged in comforting and steadying her, as if in fear she might collapse from despair.

One attendant kneels on the ground, catching the *nayika's* gaze with an outstretched hand offering a red slipper, perhaps to signal the end of her vigil. Another gently clasps her hand to support her descent from the throne. Their gestures, filled with empathy and attentiveness, embody a collective response to the *nayika's* emotional unraveling. The presence of multiple attendants, each in close proximity, each actively engaged, underscores the depth of her emotional crisis. This is a moment requiring "all hands on deck," as they seek to comfort, steady, and perhaps distract her from the pain of abandonment.

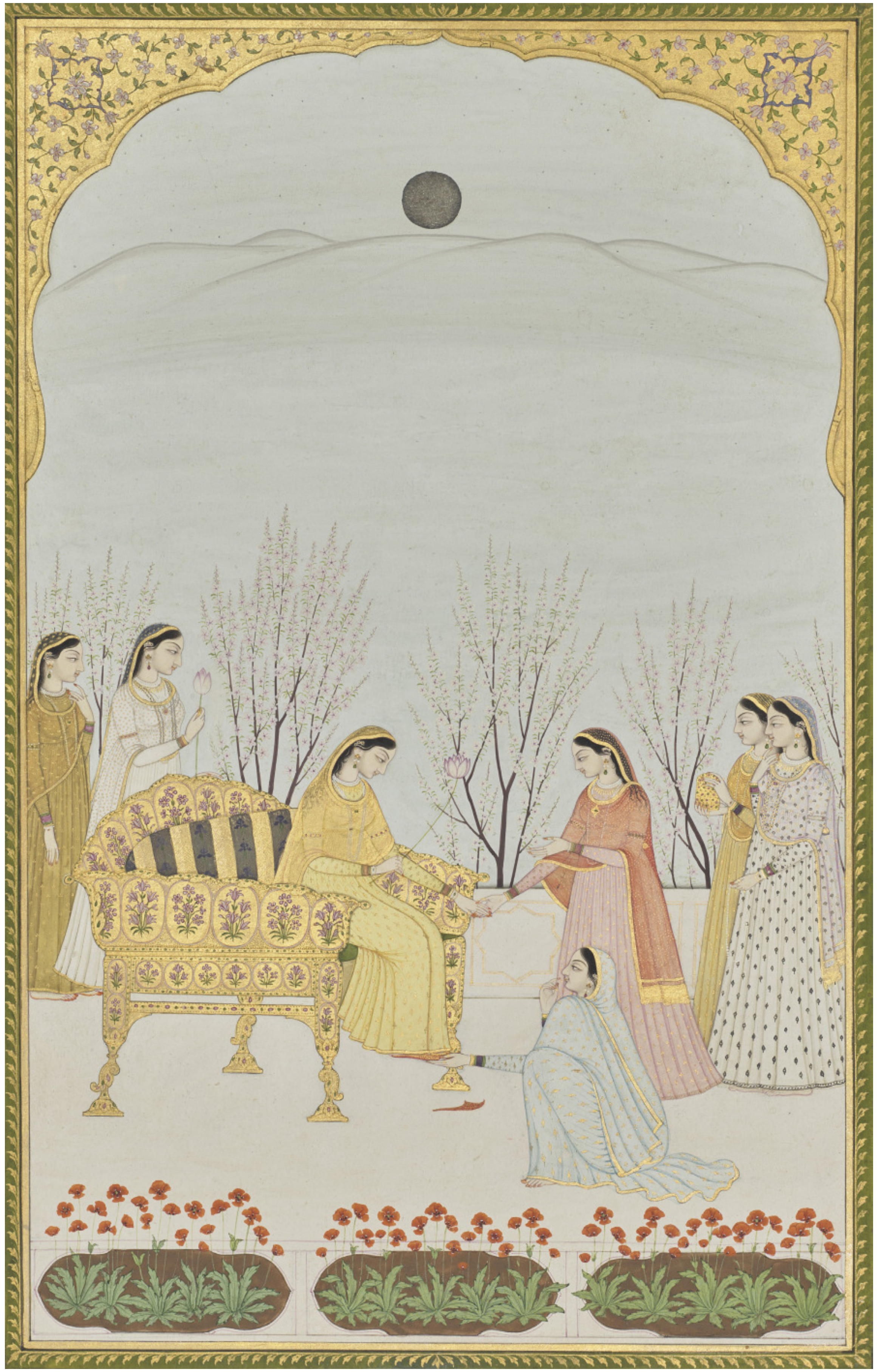
The emptiness of the surrounding landscape echoes her internal desolation. The artist's usual device of including birds, often in pairs, is notably absent, and the open, misty terrain feels as barren as her now silent household. The full moon, hanging in an almost featureless sky, magnifies her isolation and sorrow. Spring blossoms have begun to appear on the thorny bushes, and the vibrant red poppies in the foreground parterres stand in striking contrast to the overall muted, pastel palette. These poppies, delicately rendered, poignantly symbolize the fragility of the *nayika's* emotional state and the theme of "love in separation."

The golden throne, richly adorned with floral cartouches, dominates the composition yet is half-empty, a visual metaphor for the *nayika's* unfulfilled expectations. Unlike a related Basohli painting (Archer 1973, p. 42, no. 28), which is lively with activity anticipating the lover's arrival, this scene is stark and quiet. The platform is devoid of luxuries or refreshments, perhaps already cleared away by the attendants, a silent acknowledgment that the moment of joyful union will not come.

Finally, the entire scene is framed within a decorative niche, its spandrels intricately adorned with scrolling floral designs, another contrast between ornamental richness and emotional emptiness. This masterful juxtaposition reinforces the central drama: the grandeur of setting and support cannot fill the void left by the absent lover.

In addition to Lot 4 in this sale, three other pages from this *Nayika* series have now been identified. These include a page sold at Sotheby's New York on 30 June 1980 (lot 186), another illustrated in Randhawa (1962, p. 113, fig. 65), and a third currently held in the Harvard Art Museum (1971.127).

Although these works have not previously been connected, they collectively represent one of the finest *Nayika* series produced during the high point of Pahari painting.



*4

PROSHITAPREYASI NAYIKA: THE *NAYIKA* CONFIDES IN HER COMPANION

ATTRIBUTABLE TO AN ARTIST OF THE FIRST GENERATION AFTER MANAKU AND NAINSUKH,
GULER, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-80

An illustration to a *Rasikapriya*, opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the panel with gold spandrels decorated with flowers, in pink-flecked margins, reverse with a faint sketch of two female figures, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10⅜ x 6⅞in. (26.3 x 17.4cm.); folio 13⅛ x 9¼in. (33.2 x 23.6cm.)

£100,000-150,000
US$140,000-200,000
€120,000-170,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art*, 30 June 1980, lot 187

LITERATURE:

M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962, fig.42, p.75
W.G. Archer, *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London and New York, 1973, vol.1, p.52

This sublime painting illustrates the *Proshitapreyasi Nayika*, the heroine whose lover has gone away and failed to return as promised. Drawn from the *Ashta Nayika* classification in Indian poetic tradition, her emotional state is one of longing, sorrow, and emotional turbulence.

In *Rasikapriya* literature, the *sakhi* (companion) gently scolds her for her unwillingness to rejoice in the auspicious signs of her lover's return:

"Why don't you smile on this exceedingly charming day?
Your obstinacy is hard as wood; no fire of separation can burn it."
(Randhawa 1967)

As dawn breaks, we find the *nayika* and her *sakhi* in quiet dialogue upon a cool marble terrace overlooking a silver lake. The *nayika*, emotionally depleted, gazes at a delicate flower in her hand, a metaphor for her own fragile state. Her right hand steadies her against the wall, and the slight lift of her toes signals the unsteadiness of her spirit.

The *sakhi*, meanwhile, gestures persuasively. Her raised hand, lit with optimism, seeks to console, yet her half-smile may carry memories of her own recent pleasures, suggesting layered emotional interplay between the two figures.

Nature intensifies this emotional landscape. A blush of vermillion dawns in the sky, fiery, evocative, and unrelenting. Scarlet poppies bloom in deep parterres, symbols of love and longing, while a pair of water birds gliding across the lake serves as a subtle, painful reminder of the *nayika's* solitude.

The women's garments act as expressive extensions of their emotional states. The companion's translucent *sari* and boldly patterned red trousers speak of sensual confidence and engagement with the world. In contrast, the *nayika* is wrapped in a muted brown *sari* and golden shawl, the colours sombre, the layers defensive, as if guarding her vulnerability from the world.

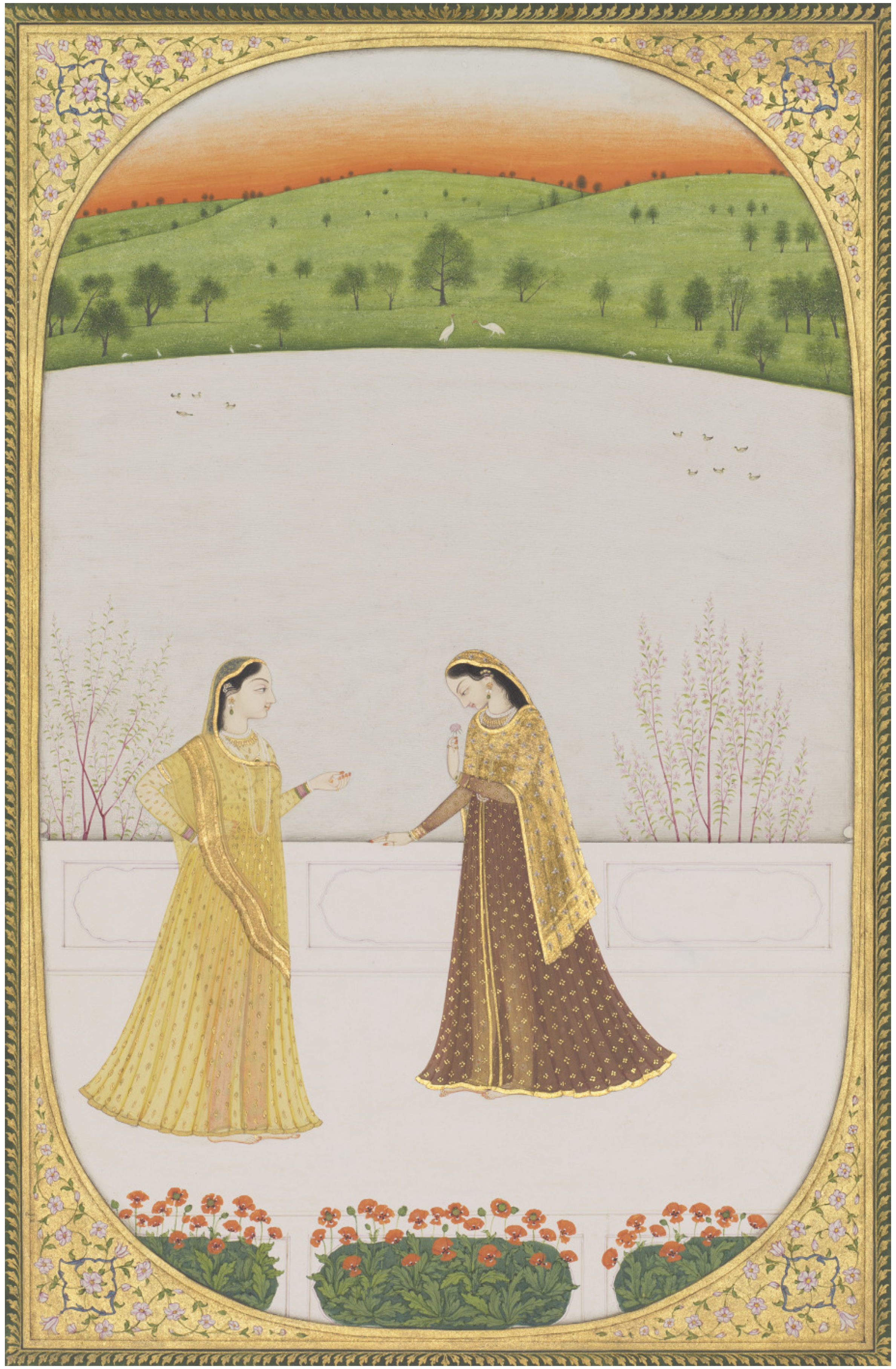
Even the flora receives unusually sensitive treatment. Instead of the stylised round bushes of conventional Pahari painting, trees here are rendered with delicate, individual strokes, each leaf like a whispered thought, each tree a quiet echo of inner life.

The composition draws formal parallels to a painting attributed to Manaku in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*Lady Smoking*, IS.91-1952, see Archer 1973, cat.no.40, pp.157-8). Yet, this work, along with lot 3 in the present sale, surpasses it in detail and emotional nuance, with finer attention to textiles and setting. Similarities in motif, such as the poppy-filled parterres, also appear in *The Music Party* (attributed to Basohli, ca.1770-1780, formerly Galbraith Collection, now Harvard Art Museum, (1971.127), and in the *Portrait of Amrit Pal* (Randhawa 1965, fig. 6).

However, despite these Basohli connections, several compositional elements suggest a more evolved artistic vocabulary. The ornate structure, layered emotional tone, and increased naturalism indicate a shift in artistic centre, from the robust, bold idiom of Basohli to the more refined elegance of Guler. The treatment of tree forms, the golden spandrels, and the emotional complexity show affinities with works attributed to Nikka, particularly in the Bahari Sat Sai series (see Archer 1973, nos.39i-iv, p. 214).

Though historically attributed to Basohli, this painting reveals stylistic qualities that bridge the aesthetic of Basohli and the emerging lyricism of the Guler school. The nuanced emotional rendering, sensitivity to textile and foliage, and compositional refinement indicate a transitional moment in Pahari painting. This work, created by an artist of the first generation after Manaku and Nainsukh, appears to capture a rarely acknowledged phase in which artists migrated both stylistically and physically, from Basohli to Guler, adapting their techniques to a new courtly taste.

As such, this illustration represents more than a poetic theme, it is a critical and overlooked link in the evolution of Pahari art, situating itself at the cusp of two great traditions and embodying the stylistic metamorphosis between them.



In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol. Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.

***5**

NAVODHA NAYIKA: THE WEDDING NIGHT

ATTRIBUTABLE TO AN ARTIST OF THE FIRST GENERATION AFTER MANAKU AND NAINSUKH,
GULER, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-90

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the circular painting within a gold border with white spandrels and a blue border, in wide pink-flecked margin, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 4in. (10.1cm.) diam.; folio 11⅞ x 8in. (30.1 x 20.3cm.)

£100,000-150,000
US$140,000-200,000
€120,000-170,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's London, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer*, 14 October 1980, lot 314
P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd, London

LITERATURE:

M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962, fig.10, p.33
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Pahari Masters, Court Painters of Northern India*, Artibus Asiae Supplement XXXVIII, Zurich, 1992, p.348

This exquisite painting depicts the *Navodha Nayika*, the newly-wed heroine, at the most emotionally charged threshold of her life: her first entry into the bridal chamber. The scene captures an unforgettable moment of vulnerability, uncertainty, and trembling anticipation.

The bride is gently led forward by her attendant, her steps hesitant, her head bowed beneath a shimmering veil of gold. Her fingers flutter delicately in mid-air, charged with hesitation and emotional fragility. This poignant fusion of innocence, apprehension, and inner turmoil defines the *navodha* archetype.

To her side, an elderly duenna, her posture grave, her expression tender, offers a steadying presence. She places a comforting hand on the young woman's back, guiding her with the quiet authority of maternal wisdom. The atmosphere is saturated with unspoken emotion, as though the very air around them holds its breath.

The spatial elements are kept deliberately minimal. The softly lit corridor and open threshold allow emotion, not architecture, to dominate. A torch held low before the bride by the golden wine-flask bearing attendant, illuminates the path ahead, its glow both literal and symbolic. In Kangra painting, the torch often stands as a visual metaphor for passion and desire, an iconographic detail explored by Archer 1973, p. 238, no. 65.

What sets this painting apart, both formally and emotionally, is its exceptionally rare circular format. Among Pahari paintings of the 18th century, this tondo composition is extraordinarily uncommon, with only one other known example from the same period (see Goswamy and Fischer 1992, p. 348 no. 149). The round frame focuses the viewer's gaze toward the centre, intensifying the psychological immediacy of the scene and creating an intimate, almost voyeuristic, involvement with the unfolding drama.

The line-work throughout is of extraordinary refinement, characterised by a sensitive, unbroken clarity that brings psychological nuance to every gesture. The veil shimmers with meticulous detailing; each contour of the figures reveals the artist's hand attuned not only to form, but to feeling.

The painting finds a deep visual and emotional parallel in the poetic traditions of classical India. As Ananda K. Coomaraswamy writes of such moments in Rajput art:

"There is a haunting charm in the gentle shyness of the bride… We may almost feel the wild beating of her heart and the tremulous touch of her red-stained fingers…"
(Rajput Painting 1916, p.64)

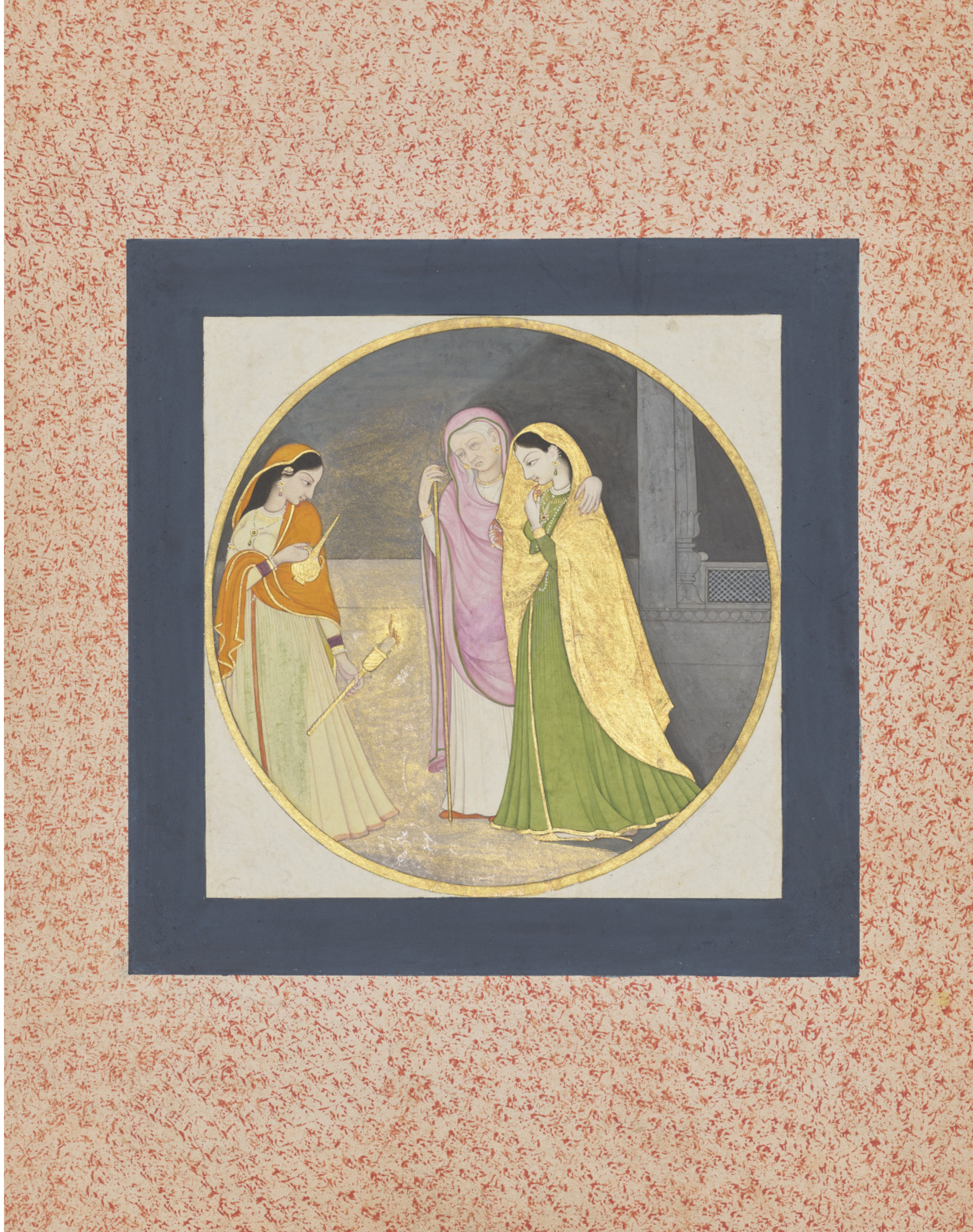
And in the verses of Vidyapati, the *navodha* is likened to:

"A fawn ensnared from the forest | Panting hard."
(Love Song of the Dark Lord, trans. Stoler Miller 1977, p.33)

A related rendering of this emotional state survives in the Victoria and Albert Museum (IS.478-1950, *Timid Radha*), where the trembling anticipation of the bride is similarly treated with exquisite delicacy. Yet, the present work surpasses it in intensity and focus, heightened by the circular format and the compositional intimacy it imposes.

This painting is not merely a fine example of *Rasikapriya* illustration, it is a rare masterpiece of emotional portraiture and formal innovation. The circular format, exceptional for its period, intensifies the psychological impact of the scene. The artist's line is of uncommon quality, expressing through minimal means a world of feeling, hesitation, tenderness, desire, and vulnerability.

Attributed to an artist of the first generation after Manaku and Nainsukh, this work reflects the continued refinement and sophistication of the Guler atelier in the last decades of the 18th century. It stands as a vivid and exceptionally rare testament to the expressive heights Pahari painting could reach, where poetry, psychology, and painterly grace converge in perfect harmony.



***6**

A LADY AT HER TOILETTE ON A TERRACE WITH A MAID

ASCRIBED TO AMARDAS BHATTI, JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1830

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within yellow border with white rules in narrow red margins, reverse with inscription attributing the work to Amardas Bhatti and with date VS1884 (1827), mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10⅝ x 6⅞in. (27.1 x 17.5cm.); folio 12 x 8¼in. (30.5 x 21cm.)

£7,000-10,000
US$9,600-14,000
€8,100-12,000

PROVENANCE:
Kumar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh, painting no. AF.12. (according to seal on the reverse)
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1984

This rare and intimate painting, attributed to Amardas Bhatti, depicts a *nayika* (heroine) preparing herself at her toilette. Standing semi-nude on a white marble terrace, she is attended by a maid who approaches with a golden tray holding two blue glass wine cups. Both women are minimally draped in fine muslin edged with gold, and the nayika is adorned with strands of pearls, emeralds, and rubies.

The mood is evocatively described in the Devanagari inscription on the verso: "A maiden in her bloom, half-clad, her tresses loosened in fleeting abandon."

The focus of the composition is wholly on the two female figures. Vegetation is entirely absent, a striking and atypical choice for Jodhpur painting, particularly under Maharaja Man Singh's reign. Instead, a pale green wash subtly contrasts the white marble terrace, enhancing the sculptural quality of the women's bodies and heightening the atmosphere of private ritual.

The heroine's facial features, elongated lotus-shaped eyes, gently swelling jaw, and a slight upward turn of the lips, are characteristic of Amardas Bhatti's hand. Her profile is softened with a hint of facial hair, a subtle detail that adds to the realism and vulnerability of the moment. Another painting signed Amardas Bhatti dated 1827 of an identical mirrored composition was held in the late Sangram Singh Collection (see Crill 2000, p.117, fig.116).

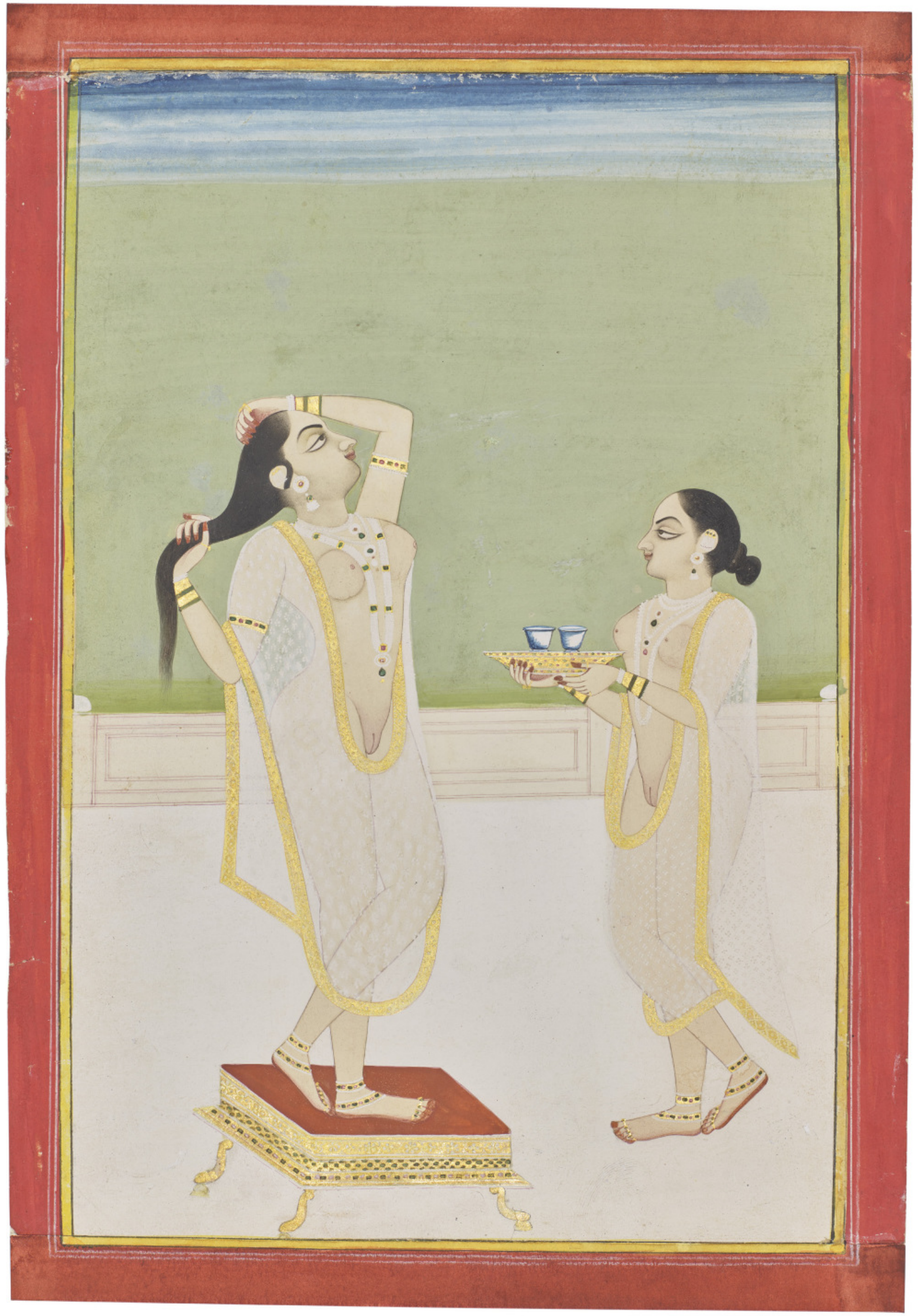
The environment is intentionally sparse, emphasizing emotional seclusion and introspective sensuality, as the *nayika* prepares herself, possibly for an anticipated romantic encounter.

Amardas Bhatti is best know for his grand and visually intense settings like *The Coronation of Maharaja Man Singh*, circa 1804 from Mehrangarh Museum Trust (see Diamond and Glynn 2008, pp.142-143, cat.no.31). Also compare with the playful scene of *Jalandharnath flies over King Padam's palace*, 1830 from the Suraj Prakash, Mehrangarh Museum Trust (RJS 1644) which demonstrates his narrative style and capacity for dynamic, mythological themes.

The most compelling comparison showing similar facial characteristics of elongated, heavy-lidded eyes; angular profiles; small, slightly upturned pursed lips is scene or *Farhad Kills Himself After Hearing the False News of Shirin's Death* in the Cleveland Museum of Art (2018.198).

This painting is a rare and finely rendered example of female introspection and sensuality within the Jodhpur court tradition. The subdued colour palette, sparse setting, and careful modelling of form are all hallmarks of Amardas Bhatti's mature style, while the inscriptions on the reverse lend rare documentary evidence for attribution and dating.

While the artist is best known for grand ceremonial and mythological compositions, works such as the present lot, focused on private moments, feminine ritual, and emotional nuance, are exceptional in both subject matter and emotional depth. It stands as a unique testimony to Amardas Bhatti's range, sensitivity, and technical brilliance within the rich artistic tradition of early 19th-century Jodhpur.



***7**

A LADY ATTENDING TO HER TOILETTE ON A TERRACE

PROBABLY JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, LATE 18TH CENTURY

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within black, red and white rules, on red margins, reverse with preliminary sketch, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 8¾ x 6⅜in. (22.1 x 16.1cm.); folio 10⅜ x 8½in. (26.5 x 21.6)

£6,000-8,000
US$8,200-11,000
€7,000-9,200

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

This elegant painting presents a lady attending to her toilette, seated on a silver bathing platform surrounded by her possessions. Her neatly rolled *saris* in green, red, and pink are arranged at her side, yet she remains bedecked in elaborate pearl, ruby, and emerald jewellery, including long-strung necklaces, armbands, earrings, and head ornaments, emphasising her refinement and elevated status.

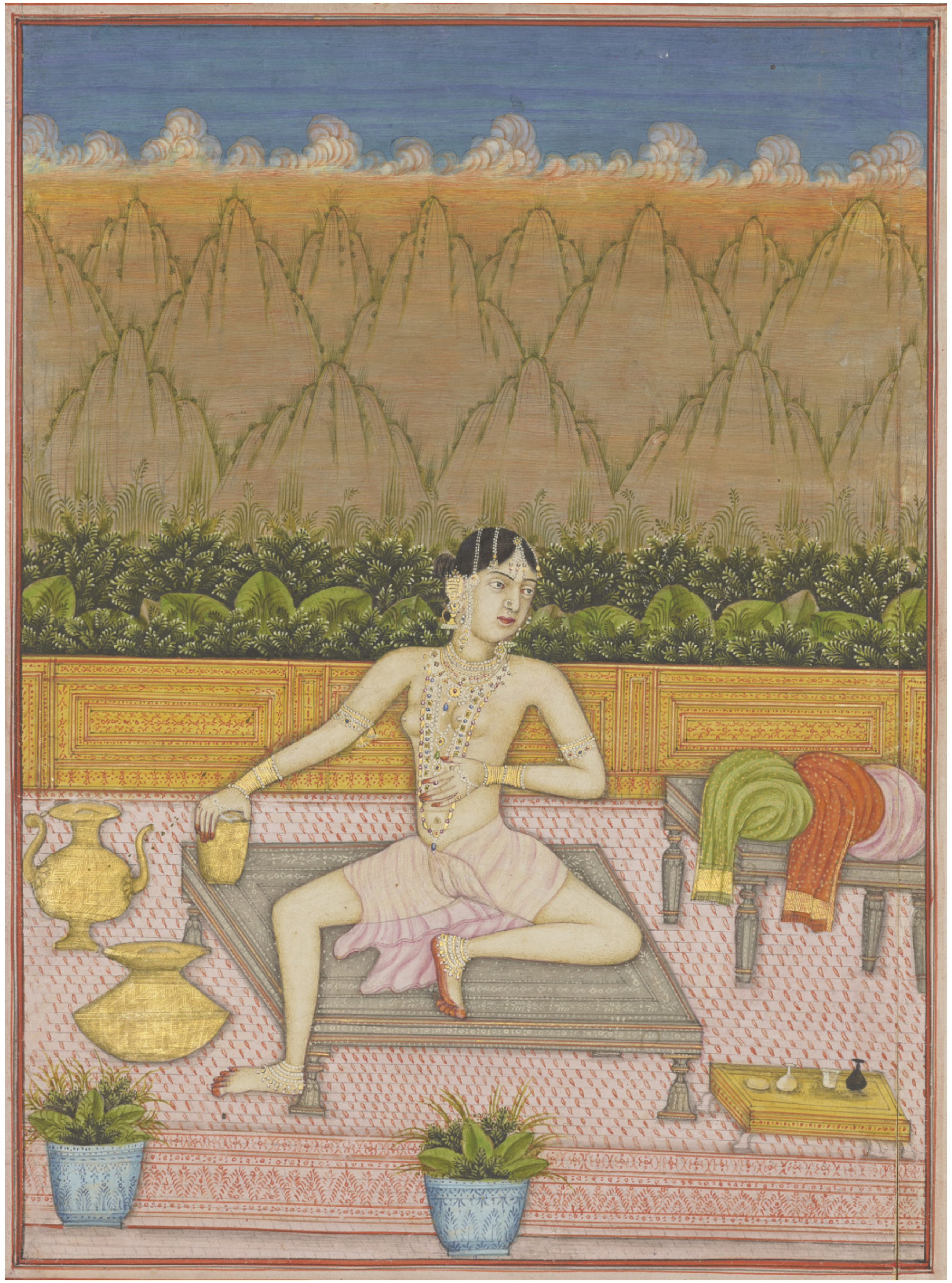
The composition is set against a distinctive and finely rendered backdrop: a layered triangular mountain range with verdant contours sits beneath a narrow strip of blue sky streaked with delicate, rainbow-tinged clouds. Behind her, lush green vegetation, broad-leaf plants and dense bushes tipped with white, create a sense of enclosed intimacy and visual richness. These elements strongly echo the visual vocabulary found in works produced by the Jodhpur court during the reign of Maharaja Man Singh. For stylistic parallels, see *Jalandharnath at Jalore* (attributed to Bhatti Amardas, Jodhpur, ca.1805–10, Mehrangarh Museum) and *Nath Yogis* in a Landscape (Marwar, Jodhpur, ca.1825, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.72.47.9).

However, it is the treatment of the female figure that sets this work apart. Unlike the often-idealised features of *nayika* figures typically found in Rajput painting, this woman's face is captured in an unusually naturalistic three-quarter profile. Her features are sharply observed and distinctive, suggesting this may be a true portrait rather than an archetype of feminine beauty. This sensitive rendering, especially in the sculptural modelling of her face, reflects a possible influence of European portraiture (see lots 13-15) and marks a significant departure from conventional Jodhpur court style.

Even more striking is the restrained and refined treatment of her partially unclothed torso. While nudity in *nayika* depictions is not uncommon, it is rarely treated with such subtlety of line and modelling. The soft shading and minimal contouring suggest an appreciation for anatomical realism more often associated with Europeanised works of the period, indicating a possible hybrid style at play.

Other curious elements abound: her bathing implements are rendered in gleaming gold and exaggerated in scale, almost symbolic rather than functional. The blue-and-white ceramic planters in the foreground feature indistinct patterns, possibly inspired by imported Chinese or Persian wares, while the block-printed textile beneath her echoes traditional Rajasthani designs, anchoring the scene firmly in the region's decorative traditions.

This composition finds certain parallels with the portrait of Begum Nur Jahan by Amar Das, illustrated in Crill 2000, p.118, no.117), which also blends portraiture with symbolic settings. For additional thematic and stylistic context, see Diamond 2008, p.146, cat.no.32.



***8**

LALITA RAGINI

PROBABLY AURANGABAD, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1650

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, the reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
6⅝ x 7½in. (16.8 x 19cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008), Cambridge, MA
P. & D. Colnaghi & Co Ltd, London, 1978

EXHIBITED:
Gods, Thrones and Peacocks. North Indian Painting from Two Traditions: Mughal and Rajput, 15th-19th centuries, Asia Society, New York, 1965
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
S.C. Welch and M.C. Beach, *Gods, Thrones and Peacocks. North Indian Painting from Two Traditions: Mughal and Rajput, Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries,* New York, 1965, no.18, pp.20, 119
T. Falk, "Mughal and Rajput Painting", *Indian Painting, Mughal and Rajput, and a Sultanate Manuscript,* Colnaghi, London, 1978, no.40, pp.42-3
M. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983, fig.32, p.48
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.127, pp.168-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.127, pp.168-9
G. Michell and M Zebrowski, *The New Cambridge History of India, 1:7, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, Cambridge, 1999, fig.117, pp.157-8

> "The presence of Rajput noblemen in the northern Deccan may have produced an important school of Hindu painting at Aurangabad. [...] The style combines the boldness of Rajput painting with a strong, somewhat melancholy Deccani palette of blue, pink, and mauve."
>
> **MARK ZEBROWSKI**

This refined *Ragamala* folio from Aurangabad, circa 1650, represents *Lalita Ragini,* the consort of *Bhairava Raga*, in a scene suffused with emotional complexity and morning stillness. More than a mere musical mode personified, *Lalita Ragini* becomes a poetic meditation on longing, separation, and romantic devotion.

The scene is set in an open pavilion, its pale mauve and white architecture gently dividing the space between heroine and hero. The sleeping woman lies beneath an embroidered orange *cintamani* skirt, her attendant dozing beside her with a *morchal* (flywhisk) still raised, a testament to their vigil and now, their exhaustion.

The departing lover stands poised, clad in a luminous gold *jama* patterned with rows of poppies. In his hand, he raises a single white blossom plucked from the garland he holds, pausing to inhale its scent as he looks back at the sleeping figure he leaves behind. His tiger-like grace is tempered by a quiet melancholy, he is at once virile and vulnerable, a warrior subdued by love.

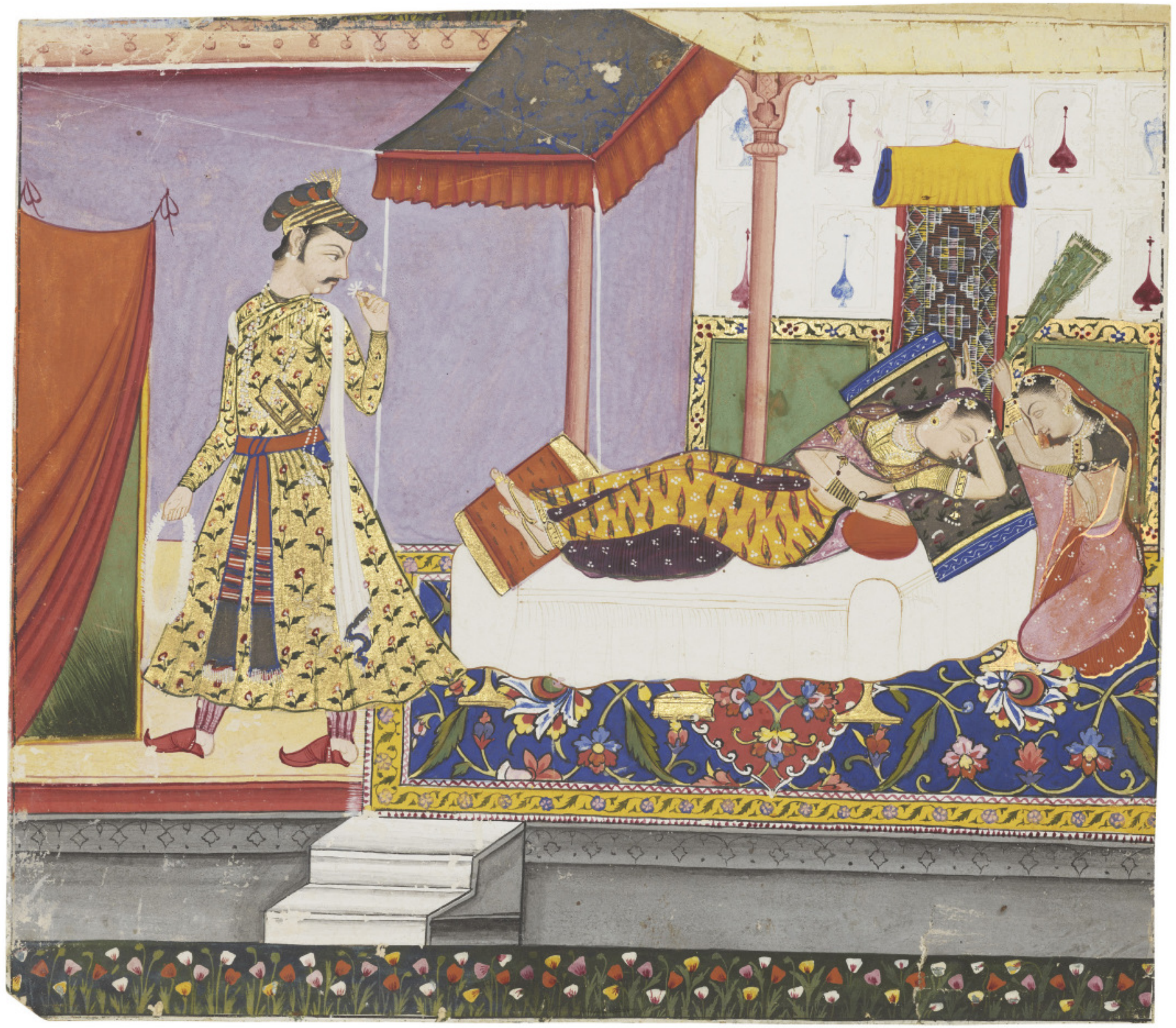
The ornate carpet beneath them, a recurring motif in this series, is boldly patterned with scrolling floral arabesques set against a deep blue ground, anchored by a central red medallion. Its visual density echoes the emotional tension in the scene.

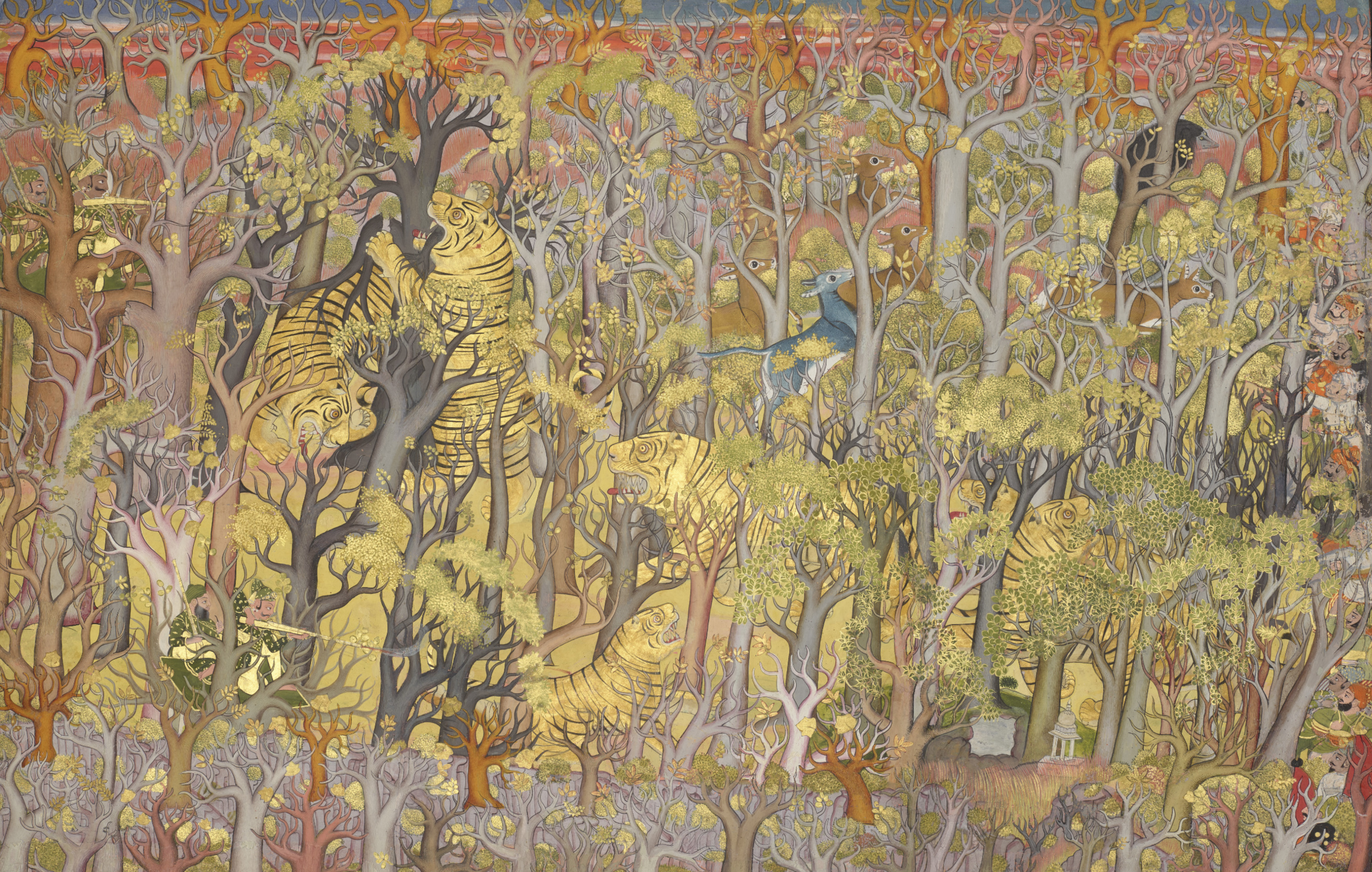
This *Ragamala* painting would be looked at whilst accompanied by a Hindi couplet by the 17th century poet Lachiman Das, intensifying its emotional atmosphere: *"A tiger hero, swaggering and truculent, seeming to be the slave of Love. Who can tell when he returns, roaring like an elephant?".* These words transform the image into a multisensory experience: a soundscape, a scent, a memory of touch, all unfolding in the liminal space between night and day, presence and absence.

This work is emblematic of a hybrid regional style that emerged in Aurangabad around 1650, where Rajput figure traditions fused with Deccani aesthetic sensibilities. The figures' expressive gestures and muscular modeling reflect Rajasthani influence, while the restrained palette, featuring mauve, blue, and soft pink, draws from Deccani taste.

The provenance of the painting, notably from the collection of Stuart Cary Welch, underscores its scholarly and connoisseurial importance. As Welch and others observed, works from this Aurangabad–Mewar school were central to the development of a distinctive *Ragamala* idiom that flourished under the patronage of both Mughal and local courts in the Deccan.

This folio of *Lalita Ragini* is not merely an illustration of musical mode it is a lyrical drama in miniature, where textiles, architecture, poetry, and figural gesture coalesce into a powerful visual melody of yearning and parting. It stands as a testament to the sophistication of mid-17th century Deccani painting and its ability to distill complex emotional states into compelling pictorial form.





*9

MAHARAO UMED SINGH (R.1771-1819) AND ZALIM SINGH HUNTING TIGERS

SIGNED BY SHAYKH TAJU, KOTAH, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, DATED SAMVAT 38/1781 AD

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, in black borders with broad red margin, reverse plain with 9ll. *devanagari* inscription, signed and dated, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 20¼ x 31½in. (51.6 x 80cm.); folio 21⅝ x 32⅝in. (54.8 x 82.8cm.)

£200,000-300,000
US$280,000-410,000
€240,000-350,000

PROVENANCE:

Probably from the collection of Kumar Sangram Singh
Baron and Baroness Bachofen von Echt, New York and London, c.1965-1980
Mrs Wendy Findlay, New York, before 1985
Doris Weiner Gallery, New York, 1986

EXHIBITED:

India, Art and Culture 1300-1900, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1985
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

S.C. Welch, *India, Art and Culture 1300-1900*, New York, 1985, no. 258, pp.380-1
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.132, p.173
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.132, p.173

INSCRIPTIONS:

On the reverse, *On the 20th of June 1781 C.E. (jeth vudi 14, Samvat [18]38) Maharao Shri Umed Singh ji [of Kotah and] Raj Shri Zalim Singh ji [from the] camp at Durrah […] a tigress [killed] by "Mamaji" [Rajrana Zalim Singh Jhala, chief minister and actual regent of Kota] [and] a tiger [killed] by "Shri Hazoor-ji" [Maharao Umed Singh ji of Kotah] […] painted by the hand of the artist Sekh Taju (pano Sekh | Taju chutera ka hath ko)*

This large-format and dramatically rendered tiger hunt is a tour de force of late 18th century Kotah painting, and an exceptional work by the accomplished court painter Shaykh Taju, probably one of only two dated finished paintings by this master artist and one of the greatest depictions of hunting in all Indian art. It exemplifies the Kotah school's distinctive visual vocabulary: panoramic landscapes, dynamic figural movement, and the emotional tension of the hunt. The intensity of form and colour is searingly powerful.

The painting commemorates one of the many tiger hunts undertaken by Maharao Umed Singh, who, like his forebears, was deeply invested in the symbolism and spectacle of the royal *shikar*. Positioned atop a tree platform (*machan*), the ruler is shown aiming his rifle at a tiger below, while the dense surrounding forest teems with movement, startled animals scatter, beaters close in, and simultaneous shots ring out from hidden vantage points. His ever-present hunting partner and chief minister, Zalim Singh, is positioned in another platform above and fires upon tigers smashing through the trees. The mayhem and the cacophony of music, gunshots and yelling pulse from the page.

Rather than presenting a tidy narrative, the artist captures the chaotic, immersive nature of the hunt. The composition is intentionally disorienting, evoking the unpredictability of the wilderness. The viewer's eye is drawn across multiple layers of activity, with no single-point perspective, a hallmark of Kotah painting that finds few equivalents in South Asian art. These compositions prefigure the aesthetics of European panoramas or even the jungle dreamscapes of Henri 'Douanier' Rousseau, a parallel that art historians have drawn for its surreal spatial layering and emotional charge.

While the inscription on the reverse was largely obscured by conservation backing paper, a recent re-reading by Joachim Bautze, following partial removal of the backing paper, has confirmed the identity of Maharao Umed Sing and Zalim Singh, the artist Shaykh Taju, and the date. The inscription even gives the precise date of the hunt: 20 June 1781.

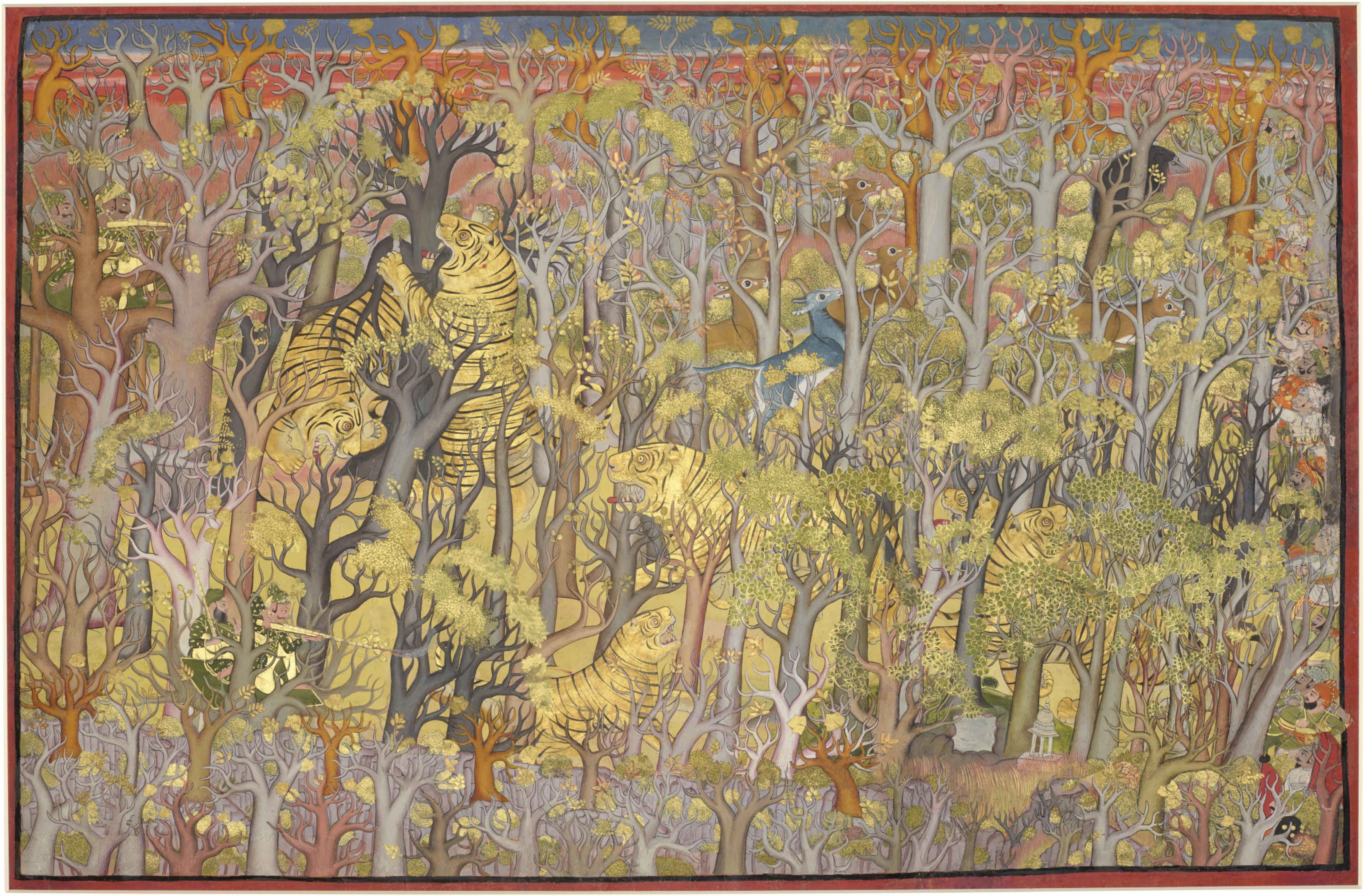
As noted by Stuart Cary Welch, in discussion of a closely related work by Shaykh Taju "Because Maharao Umed Singh was an especially ardent hunter, eager to document the precise location and circumstances of each drive and bag, he commissioned his court artists to paint highly detailed descriptions such as this one. His chief minister (*divan*) and fellow huntsman, Zalim Singh Jhala, moreover, seems to have brought to Kotah several young artists from the Mewar court. These talented painters appear to have been trained to paint far less lively animals than those of the Kotah school; Shaykh Taju seems to have been called upon to set up a finishing school in zoological art" (Welch 1997, p.166, no.45).

Joachim Bautze has noted that three drawings or sketches and four large, finished paintings are inscribed with the name of the artist Shaykh Taju or *Shaykh Chutera Taju*. The present painting and an inscribed hunting scene in the collection of the Rao Madho Singh Museum Trust, Kotah (Welch 1997, cat.no.45) are probably the only known dated finished paintings by the artist Shaykh Taju. A close comparison can be found in two unfinished works attributed to Shaykh Taju and dated 1780 in the Jadish Mittal Collection (76.670. DR105 and 76.684 DR119), see Topsfield and Mittal 2015, pp.168-71 and 198-201, nos. 77 and 91. Another section of the study drawing (76.684 DR119) dated 1780 and attributed to Shaykh Taju by inscription from the Cynthia Hazen Polsky Collection is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2019.445.4).

Close comparisons of other large format hunt scenes are found in the Chester Beatty Library (Leach 1995, no.10.44 pl.143); Victoria and Albert Museum (Archer 1952, p.54, no.2, figs.37 and 38) and in Kotah Palace (Bara Mahal) mural traditions with similar compositional schemes (see Beach 1974, fig.III). Also compare related hunting scenes Sotheby's New York, 22 March 2002, lot 27; Fogg 2003, no.32; Goswamy and Smith 2005, no. 37; and Cummins 2006, fig. 8, p.162.

This painting is a seminal example of the school's genius in narrating royal power and ritual through the spectacle of the hunt. Selected for the ground breaking exhibition *India! Art and Culture 1300-1900* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1985, one of the most prestigious exhibitions ever mounted on Indian art, it helped cement Kotah painting's place in the global canon of art history.

Its monumental scale, compositional complexity, and emotional charge elevate this painting beyond documentation into a work of dramatic visual poetry. Whether viewed as a historic record, a meditation on chaos and control, or a stylized vision of royal masculinity, this painting resonates as a true masterpiece of Rajput painting.



***10**

THE FESTIVAL OF *NANDMAHOTSAV*

MEWAR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1880

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on cloth, narrow red border, wrapped onto board, mounted, framed and glazed
23⅜ x 19⅝in. (59.5 x 49.8cm.)

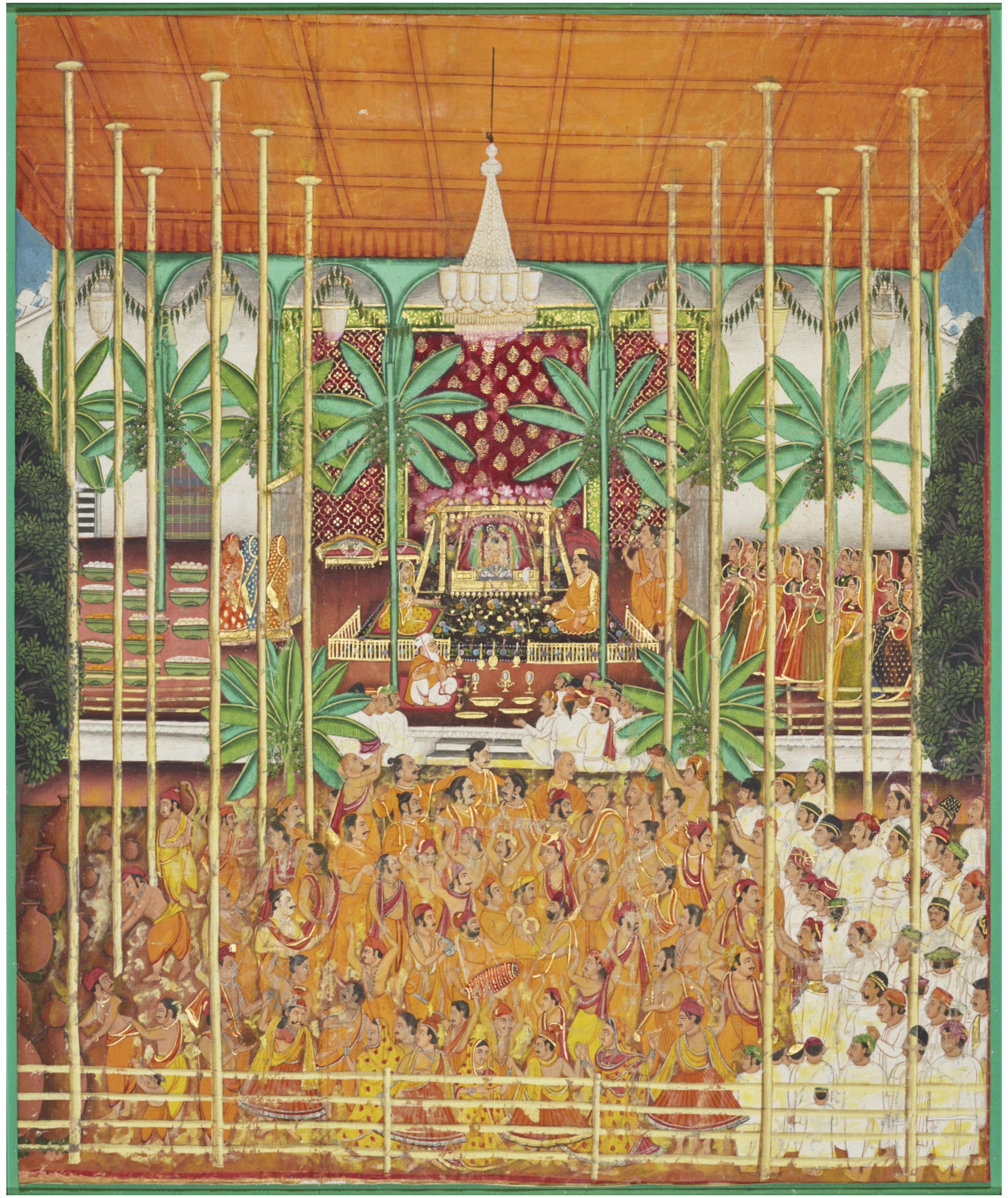
£15,000-25,000
US$21,000-34,000
€18,000-29,000

PROVENANCE:
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts, Islamic Works of Art and 19th Century Paintings,* 14 December 1979, lot 157

Rich with colour and movement, this painting depicts the festival of *Nandmahotsava*. The festival is intended to re-enact the celebration thrown by Nanda upon bringing his foster-son Krishna home to Vraj. In the Pushtimarg a priest will dress as Nanda for the occasion, donning a white beard and moustache, and shakes a golden rattle while the cradle containing the *swarup* (deity) is rocked by another attendant dressed as Yashoda. In our painting both are seated to the left below the cradle. It is then traditional for the temple attendants to dress as *gopis* and *gopas* and dance around musicians, all whilst throwing milk and curd coloured with turmeric. Nandmahotsava occurs the day after Krishna's birthday, Janmashtami, and therefore we still see the golden gifts in front of the *swarup's* cradle. As is traditional for Janmashtami, the *swarup* is dressed in saffron robes and bedecked with jewellery whilst the colour of the *pichhvai* is red (Ambalal 1987, p.28). A similar depiction of Nandmahotsava can be found on a *pichhvai* for the festival dated circa 1900 from the collection of Anil Relia (Relia 2013, pp. 58-59).

Two other paintings on cloth of near identical dimensions show different festivals at the same shrine. One was sold at Sotheby's New York, 1 April 2005, lot 122 and the other in these Rooms, 23 September 2005, lot 159. All three show a similar large courtyard with an arcade at the far end decorated with imitation palm tree columns and European glass lamps hanging above. However, our painting seems unique with the addition of the orange canopy erected above the courtyard and suspending a vast glass chandelier. The present lot and the two other paintings have previously been attributed to Nathdwara but this cannot be the location of the scene because the *swarupa* shown is not Sri Nathji or Navanitpriyaji, both of which are housed in the *haveli* in Nathdwara. It is most likely to depict Dvarkhadhishji which is housed in a large *haveli* in Kankroli, nearby to Nathdwara in Mewar (for a painting of the worship of Dvarkadhishji in Kankroli, circa 1880, see Cleveland Museum of Art, 2001.161). The haveli at Kankroli has a large open courtyard which accords with what is depicted here.

If the painting depicts the *haveli* at Kankroli, rather than Nathdwara, then the figure sat to the right of Dvarkhadhishji in orange would be Balkrishnalalji (1868-1917), the Tilkayat (head priest) of Kankroli. The profile of Balkrishnalalji is consistent with other known portraits including a painting showing Balkrishnalalji with Tilkayat Govardhanlal in Nathdwara, dated circa 1904, which is in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv.no. RP-T-1993-413). Another painting of Balkrishnalalji in a procession from the collection of Anil Relia is dated slightly earlier to 1880 and, although the portrait is a three-quarter view, the Tilkayat appears closer in age to the present lot (Soni 2016, pp.92-93). It is notable in the Anil Relia painting of Balkrishnalalji, who is riding a horse, that the attendants in his entourage bear similarity to the figures populating the crowd in the present lot further suggesting a similar dating. Despite the importance of Dvarkadhishji, paintings of the *swarup* are rare compared to the number of images of Shri Nathji and representations of the *haveli* at Kankroli are even rarer.



***11**

THE *DARBAR* OF TANSI THAKUR BHAG SINGHI

BY RAM NARAYAN, MEWAR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, DATED 1880

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the figures labelled with black *devanagari* script, narrow blue border decorated with birds and scrolling flowers, pasted onto wooden board, framed and glazed
Painting 40 x 32¾in. (101.5 x 83.1cm.); folio 42⅞ x 35½in. (109 x 89.8cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:
Spink and Son Ltd, London, 1979

EXHIBITED:
India, Art and Culture 1300-1900, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1985

LITERATURE:
Octagon, A Quarterly Journal for Discerning Collections, No.16, 1979, no.4, p.19
S.C. Welch, *India, Art and Culture 1300-1900*, New York, 1985, no.294, pp.442-4
N. Chaldecott, *Dhurries: History, Pattern, Technique, Identification*, London, 2003, fig.53, p.40

This remarkable painting, dated to the third day of the Savan month (July-August), Vikram Samvat 1936 (equivalent to 1880 CE), was painted by the accomplished artist Ram Narayan from Gudha Kansu. The work is a visual and historical tour de force, offering an extraordinary glimpse into the grandeur and ceremonial pageantry of Thakur Bhag Singh's *darbar* in late July of 1880. Rich with detail, the composition is densely inscribed, with nearly every figure, down to the fan bearers, carefully identified. Far more than a courtly portrait, this painting stands as an invaluable historical document and testament to Ram Narayan's exceptional skill as both an artist and chronicler.

As noted by Welch (1985, p.444) 'By 1880, painters were losing out to photographers at courts in India-if they had not already taken to the new art themselves in a scramble for patronage. To compete, painters had explored all avenues, from making painted copies of photographs, to painting over them, to, as here, adding portraits in photographic style to traditional compositions'

At the center of the composition, Bhag Singh is depicted in a strikingly natural pose, leaning casually against a bolster, his face calm and contemplative as he takes in the proceedings. The courtly assembly is arranged in strict descending order of rank and importance, with each dignitary rendered in remarkable detail. His son, Kunwar Gopal Singhji, is seated on his right and his secretary, Khiali Ahmedji, on his left. Though each is identified through inscriptions, Ram Narayan's commitment to likenesses is clear: many faces appear true to life, complete with subtle expressions that suggest personality and presence.

Among the notable attendants who are seated in front of Bhag Singh, and identified by inscription are Kisan Lal, Harnarayan Daroga, Kaluram, Nathu Daroga, Manalal, Devi Ram Pujari, Bakhtavar Singh Tuvar, Qaji Ali Ahmed Ji, Phul Ji Rasaladar, Dol Ji, Bal Ji Nirpan, Daryava Singh, Hanoto Nathuram Ko, and Arjan.

One of the most visually arresting elements of the painting is the large flat-woven cotton *dhurrie* that spans the entire floor of the composition. Its elaborate patterning threatens to upstage the gathering itself. Framed neatly by the pink sandstone palace walls and dense foliage in the background, the *dhurrie* features striking royal blue and pale bands at the sides, accented with chevron motifs. A bold orange central runner cuts across the floor like a ceremonial runway, leading the viewer's eye directly to the seated ruler.

The use of flat perspective in the composition enhances the visual drama, pressing figures toward the top and bottom edges and emphasising the expansive surface beneath them. In Rajasthan's palatial interiors, cotton *dhurries* were often layered over heavier carpets with deep pile, creating a cooler and softer surface underfoot, particularly essential in the searing heat of July, when this event took place.

At the base of the composition, musicians and dancers have begun their performance, slowly making their way upward toward the ruler, suggesting that the festivities are just beginning. The only other figures in motion are the fan bearers, who attempt to keep the attendees cool as they observe the event.

The setting bursts with detail and spectacle. A merry-go-round is tucked in the top left corner, while a Ferris wheel, dancers, and a menagerie of birds occupy the bottom left. Along the sides, acrobats perform feats of strength and endurance, while military personnel dressed in European uniforms hint at the hybridisation of Indian tradition with colonial modernity. Even English-style lamps make an appearance, subtly signalling the ruler's openness to modernisation and technological progress.

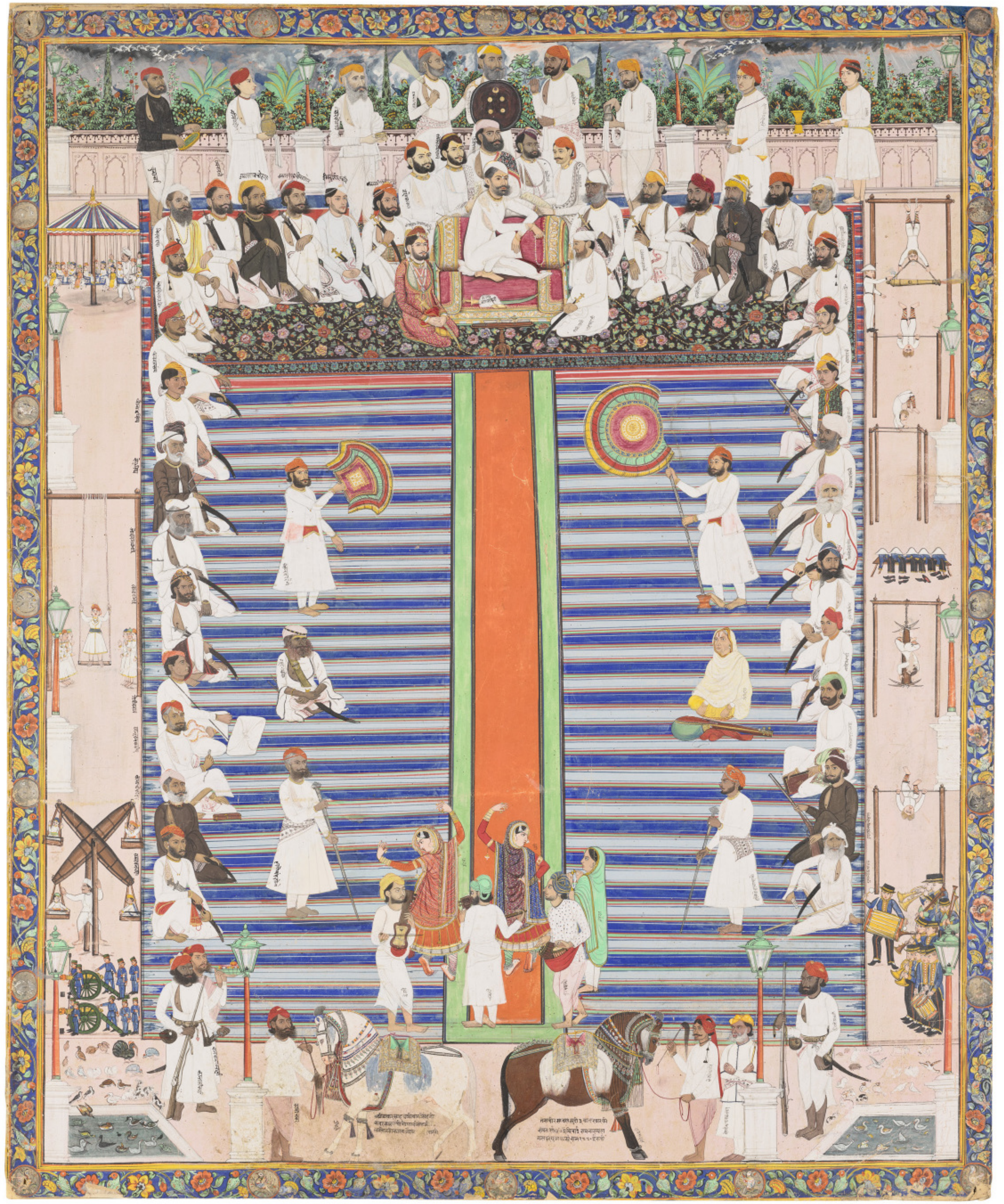
At the center front, prized stallions are prominently displayed, a traditional point of pride for a Rajput ruler. Beneath them, an inscription reads:

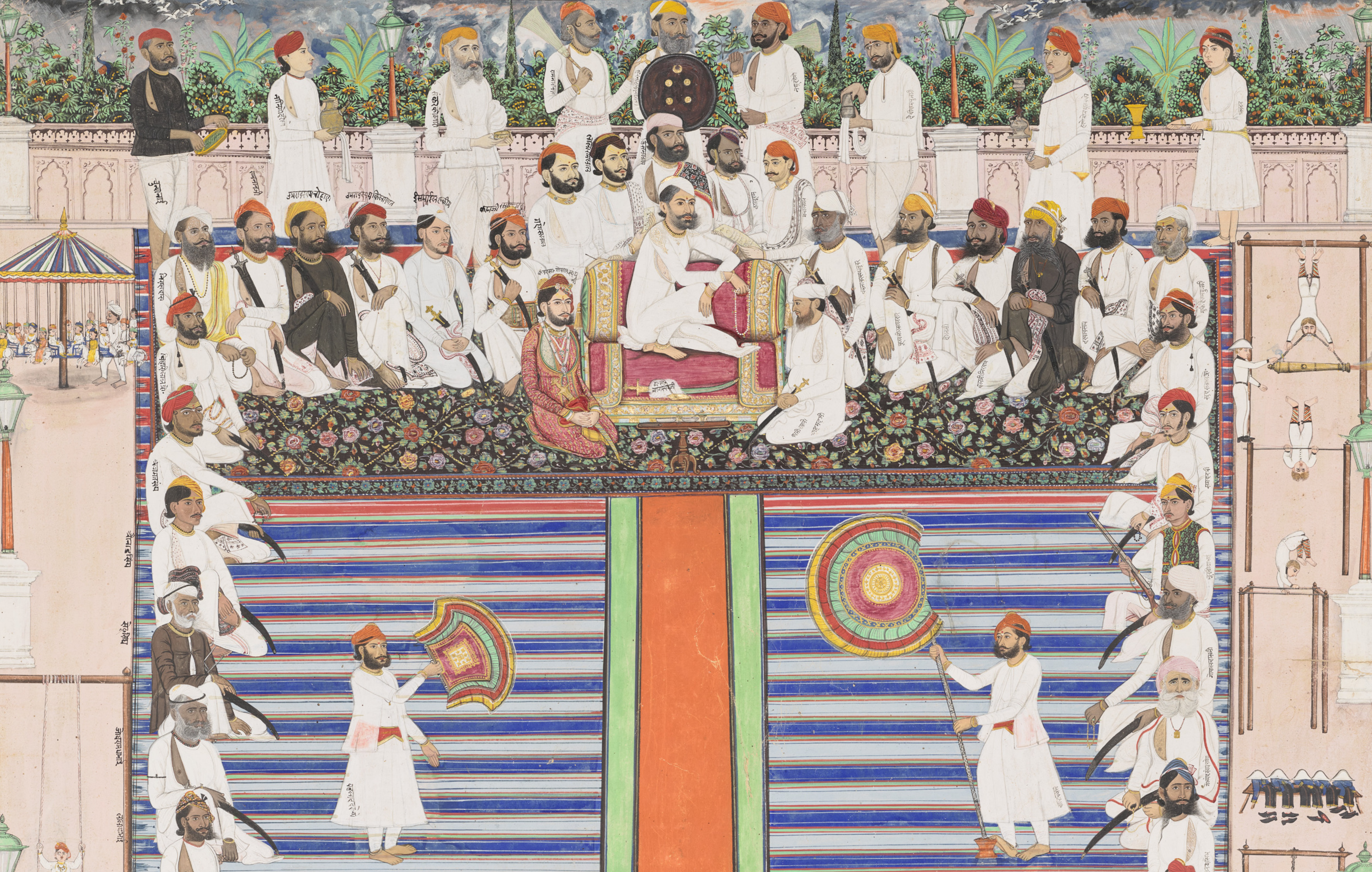
"In honour of Thakur Sahib Sri Bhag Singh Ji and Kunwar Sahib Sri Gopal Singh Ji of the Thikana (estate) of Jaul: [depiction] of the *Darbar*."

Finally, the chocolate-brown carpet field beneath the *dhurrie* is decorated with delicate scrolling arabesques, echoing European decorative tastes that had found their way into the palaces of North India. This fusion of styles, Rajput ceremonial tradition with Victorian aesthetics, makes the painting not only a document of court life but also a visual record of a cultural moment in transition.

This large scale composition matches a similar work of Maharaja Jawan Singh receiving Governor General of India, Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, Mewar, 1832, formally in the Ehrenfeld collection (see Bautze, *Interaction of cultures : Indian and western painting, 1780-1910 : the Ehrenfeld collection*, 1998, p. 158, no. 40).

This dazzling and large scale record of the opulence enjoyed at small courts (*thikana*) outside of the major centres of Mewar and Mawar. Most importantly it is a reflection of the last gasp of court painting at the end of the 19th century before the photography usurped the tradition that had endured for 400 years.




ईसमाईल हकीम
कानजी

***12**

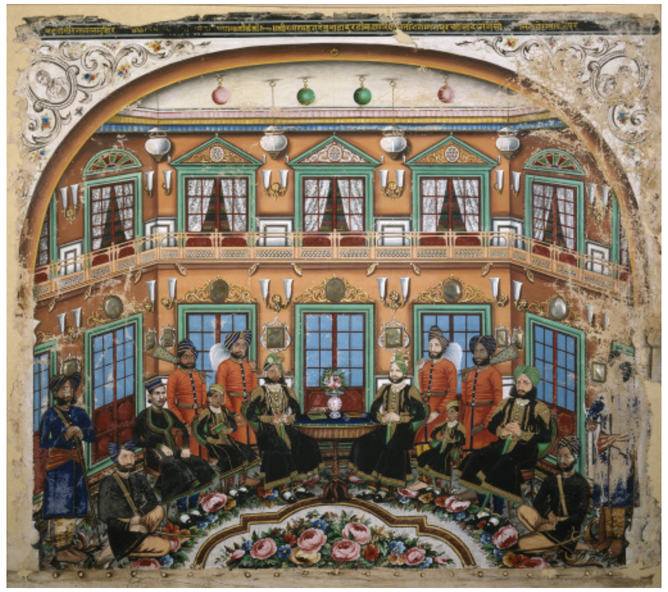
A RULER, PROBABLY THAKUR RUPSHAHJI DEV BAHADUR, SEATED WITH COURTIERS IN A PALACE

ATTRIBUTABLE TO MOHAN LAL, JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, LATE 19TH CENTURY

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on cloth, backed onto board, framed and glazed
35⅞ x 29⅝in. (91 x 74.6cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:
Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan by May 1982



Rajput noblemen in an interior, signed Mohan Lal, *circa* 1890, EA1995.34
© Ashmolean Museum

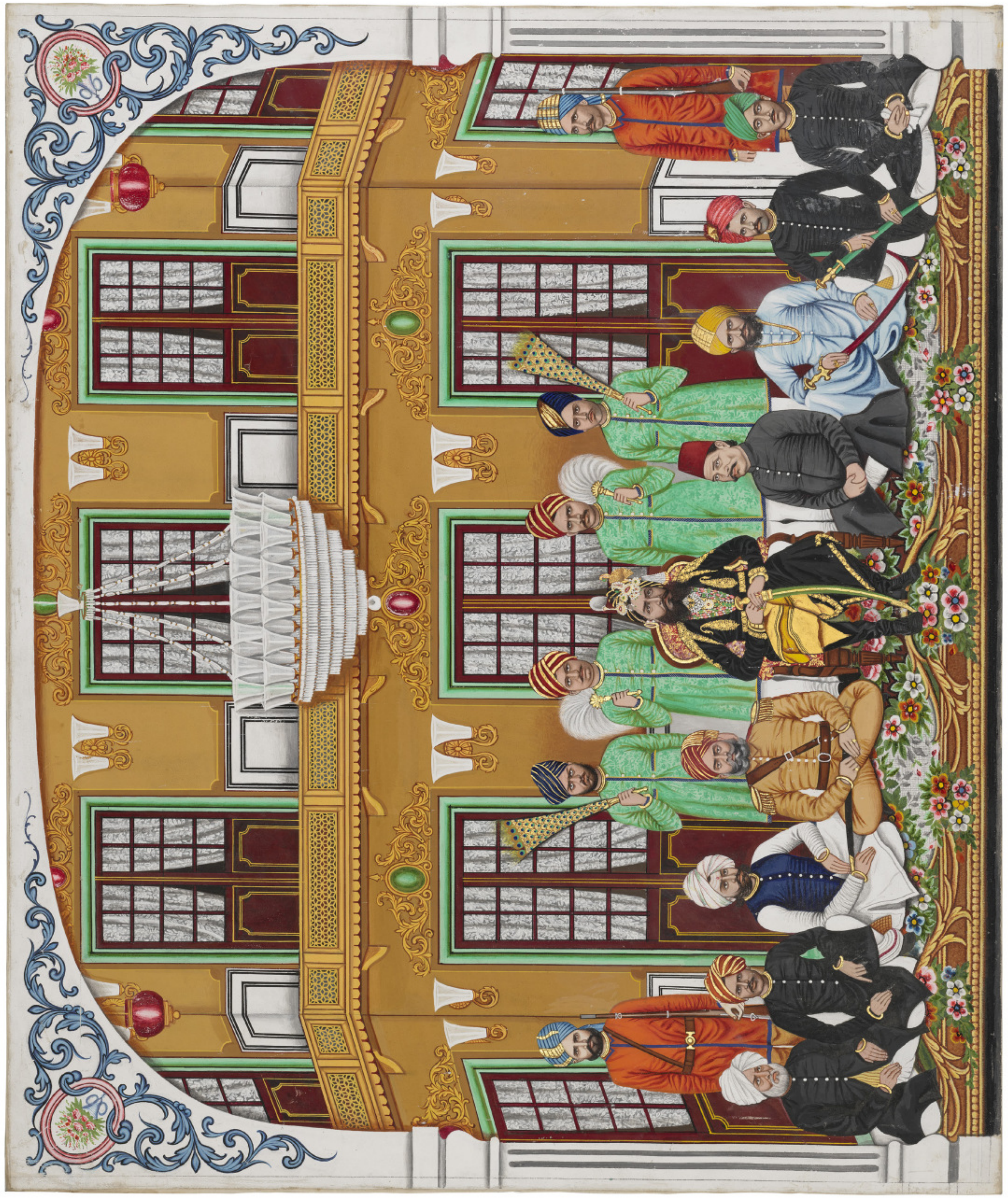
This very large and captivating painting likely depicts Thakur Rupshahji Dev Bahadur. Set within an ornate European-style interior, he sits on a chair with courtiers sat either side and attendants stand ready behind. As if in a photograph, each member of the group, some of whom stare directly out at the viewer, is captured suspended in a singular moment in time.

By the mid-19th century the first commercial photography studios began to appear in India, quickly followed by a profusion of photography societies and amateur clubs. Initially just in the British presidency towns of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the popularity of the emerging medium quickly spread (Nayar 2024). Against an existing backdrop of decline, Indian court painting soon found the emergence of photography as an almost existential challenge. In Rajasthan the challenge was particularly acute in Jaipur during the reign of Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh (1835-80). The Maharaja was a great moderniser but also a very serious photographer and referred to as the first "photographer prince" after buying his first camera in 1864 (Bautze 1998, no.34, p.174). However, traditional painting in Jaipur still had one "final flourish" (Topsfield 2021, p. 294).

Mohan Lal, who likely painted the present scene, was one of many Jaipur court-trained artists that were likely dismissed by Sawai Ram Singh and quickly found patronage hard to come by. Some artists found employment applying colour to hand-tinted photographs but Mohan Lal was perhaps the most successful at adapting to the photographic challenge and produced paintings in the style of Western Studio photography which both rivalled and subverted the practice (Topsfield 2000, p.10). Painting to commission, Mohan Lal would have faced stiff competition from the growing number of professional photographers in Jaipur trained at the newly established Maharaja's School of Arts - which did not encourage traditional Indian painting. However, the known paintings by the artist, some of which are inscribed, clearly shows that Mohan Lal found popularity and patronage in Jaipur and the surrounding area for his quasi-photographic style.

Thakur Rupshahji Dev Bahadur is identified by an inscription in another closely comparable painting by Mohan Lal dated circa 1890 in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (EA1995.34). Although the Thakur in the Ashmolean painting has a slightly different beard, both men have the same nose and similarly direct stare. It is quite possible that our work, which is a little more refined in its portraiture, was created some years after the Ashmolean painting. That painting, which shows the Thakur sat opposite Maharaja Madho Singh II of Jaipur, is of a near exact size to ours and is also painted on cloth. Like the Ashmolean painting, Mohan Lal frames the scene with a theatrical proscenium arch which gives way to a lavish two-storey interior replete with European style-mouldings, chandeliers and carpet. Nonetheless, we are reminded that this is still an Indian setting by the presence of the ornate *jali*-style stonework balcony. The close similarity of interior arrangement may also indicate the same patron for both paintings.

Another similar work by Mohan Lal, this time on paper but inscribed, like the Ashmolean painting, depicts the Thakur Balwant Singh at a dance performance (Philadelphia Museum of Art, acc.no. 2004.149.79). Again, the arrangement closely follows the conventions of European studio photography with figures stiffly arranged in rows and their expressions, frozen in a single moment in time. However, the impressive scale and vitality of colour overcome the rigidity of the composition and inject a warmth that cannot be achieved in a photograph. According to Terence McInerney, these were the key competitive advantages that Mohan Lal held over photography that would have kept him in employment until the fashion for photographic style paintings altogether collapsed in the early twentieth century (Mason 2001, p.208).



These three paintings (lots 13-15) offer a luminous tableau of cultural exchange and aesthetic desire in the twilight of the Mughal court. At their centre stand courtesans, self-assured, gazing out with a knowing poise, surrounded by the accoutrements of Empire: neoclassical columns, imported furniture, and a curated gallery of European engravings. Their worlds are not merely ornamental; they are stages upon which global empires, personal longing, and aesthetic ideologies collide. For closely related paintings, please see lots 16 and 17.

Painted in the early decades of the 19th century, these works belong to a lesser-known genre of Mughal miniature painting that embraced European visual idioms even as it retained the elegance of Indo-Persian courtly aesthetics. The Corinthian columns and Regency furniture are not incidental, they reflect a deliberate absorption and reinterpretation of British material culture, filtered through a Mughal lens. The artist composes a mise-en-scène of aspiration and irony, staging colonial modernity as both exotic backdrop and intimate stage.

The paintings seduce, but also subvert. The subject, a courtesan engaged in an ambiguous act of performance or leisure, commands the gaze, her expression oscillating between invitation and indifference. Such female figures were never passive muses; rather, they were connoisseurs of music, poetry, and courtly love, often functioning as intermediaries between cultures and classes.

The paintings draw deeply from the classical Indian aesthetic tradition of *Sringara*, one of the nine *rasas* or emotional essences theorised in ancient Sanskrit dramaturgy. *Sringara* encompasses not merely eroticism, but also beauty, love, longing, and refined sensuality. In visual art, it manifests in both explicit romantic scenes and more subtle tableaux of aesthetic pleasure: the arranging of hair, the playing of music, or the exchange of glances.

In these paintings, *Sringara* operates on multiple registers. On one level, it is embodied in the sumptuous textile folds, the delicate gestural language, and the careful rendering of the courtesans' ornaments and surroundings. But it also animates the paintings' emotional tenor, their suggestion of inner life, their celebration of ornamentation not as excess, but as essence.

Sringara here is not purely indigenous. It is reimagined in conversation with European portraiture and interior scenes, where figures are often embedded in richly appointed domestic spaces. Yet, unlike their European counterparts, the subjects here are not wives or daughters, but women of the *kotha*, trained courtesans whose artistry extended from dance and poetry to the very act of aesthetic self-fashioning.

These three paintings offer a visual and emotional archaeology of a pivotal cultural moment. Created at a time when the Mughal empire had receded into ceremonialism and the East India Company governed with ruthless efficiency, these works reflect both capitulation and quiet defiance.

While the British imported architecture, furniture, and etiquette, the courtesans remain unmoved in their centrality. Their gaze is directed not toward the viewer, but toward some internal horizon—perhaps a lover, perhaps themselves. In this way, the paintings resist full absorption into colonial spectacle. They remind us that the language of desire, beauty, and performance cannot be easily translated or colonised.

These paintings are not merely exotic artifacts or historical curiosities, they are sophisticated meditations on identity, beauty, and power. They invite the viewer to linger, to decode, and ultimately to reckon with the entangled histories of empire, aesthetics, and love. They are works that exemplify the persistence of *Sringara*, not as nostalgia, but as an enduring mode of seeing, feeling, and being.

***13**

A YOUNG WOMAN CHOOSING HER JEWELLERY AFTER BATHING

ALWAR OR DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1820-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on card, set within black and gold borders, the narrow ivory margins with blue and red rules, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 4⅝in. (19 x 11.8cm.); folio 8¼ x 5½in. (21 x 13.9cm.)

£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Spink and Son Ltd., London, 1981

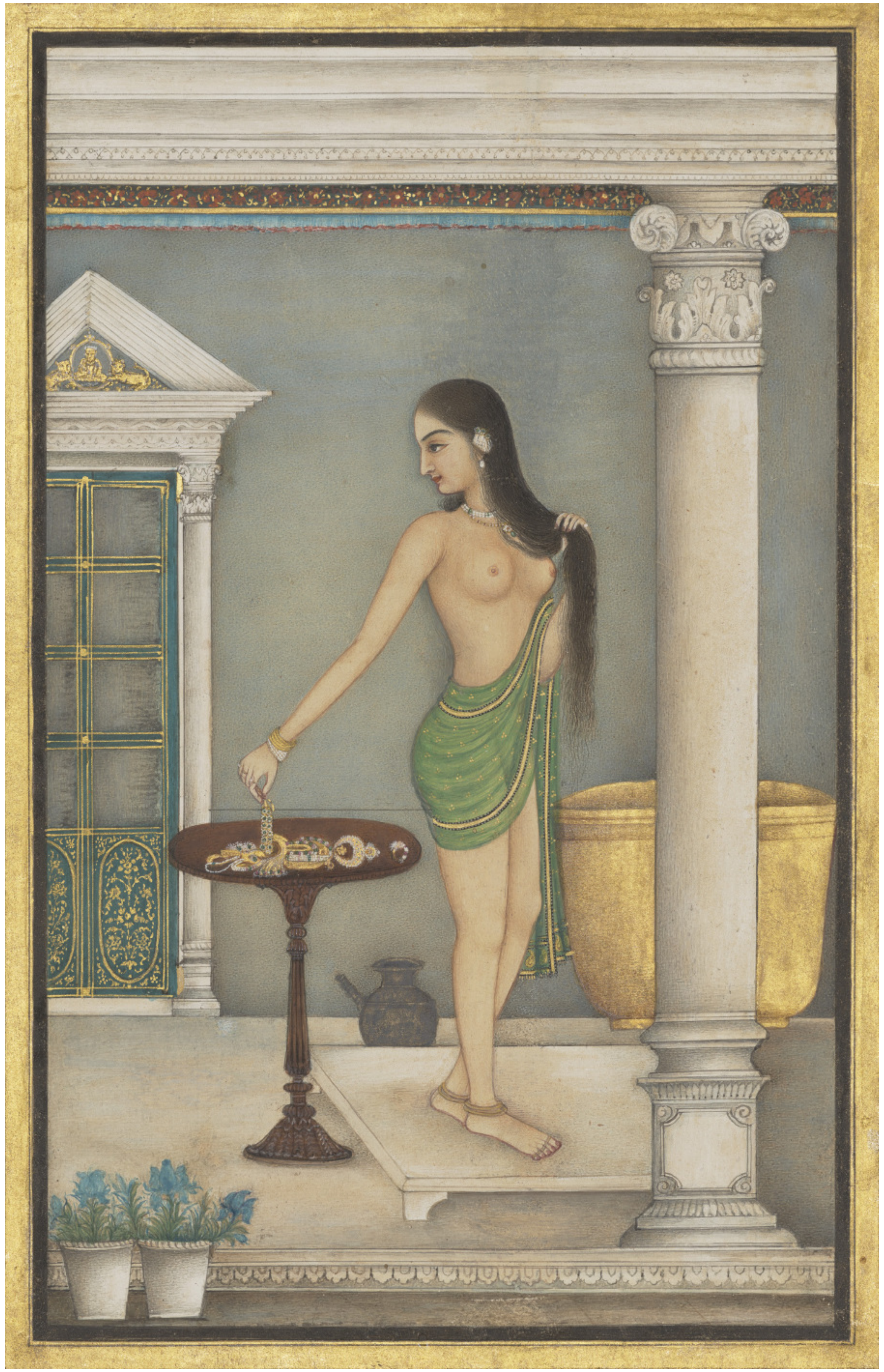
A young lady, fresh from her bath, stands gracefully on a small platform clutching her green diaphanous shawl and hair in her left hand, and retrieves her jewellery that is heaped on a circular table to her right. The lady dominates the richly adorned interior, drawing inspiration from neoclassical design yet infused with regional opulence. The Corinthian column stands as imposing anchors and perhaps a refuge to hide behind if an unwelcomed visitor interrupts the intimate scene. Additionally the column bisects the larger brass water basin while the *kundika* (water vessel) is positioned directly behind the low marble platform. The green doors with eight glass panels are shut and are neatly framed by thin columns and neo-classical triangular pediment.

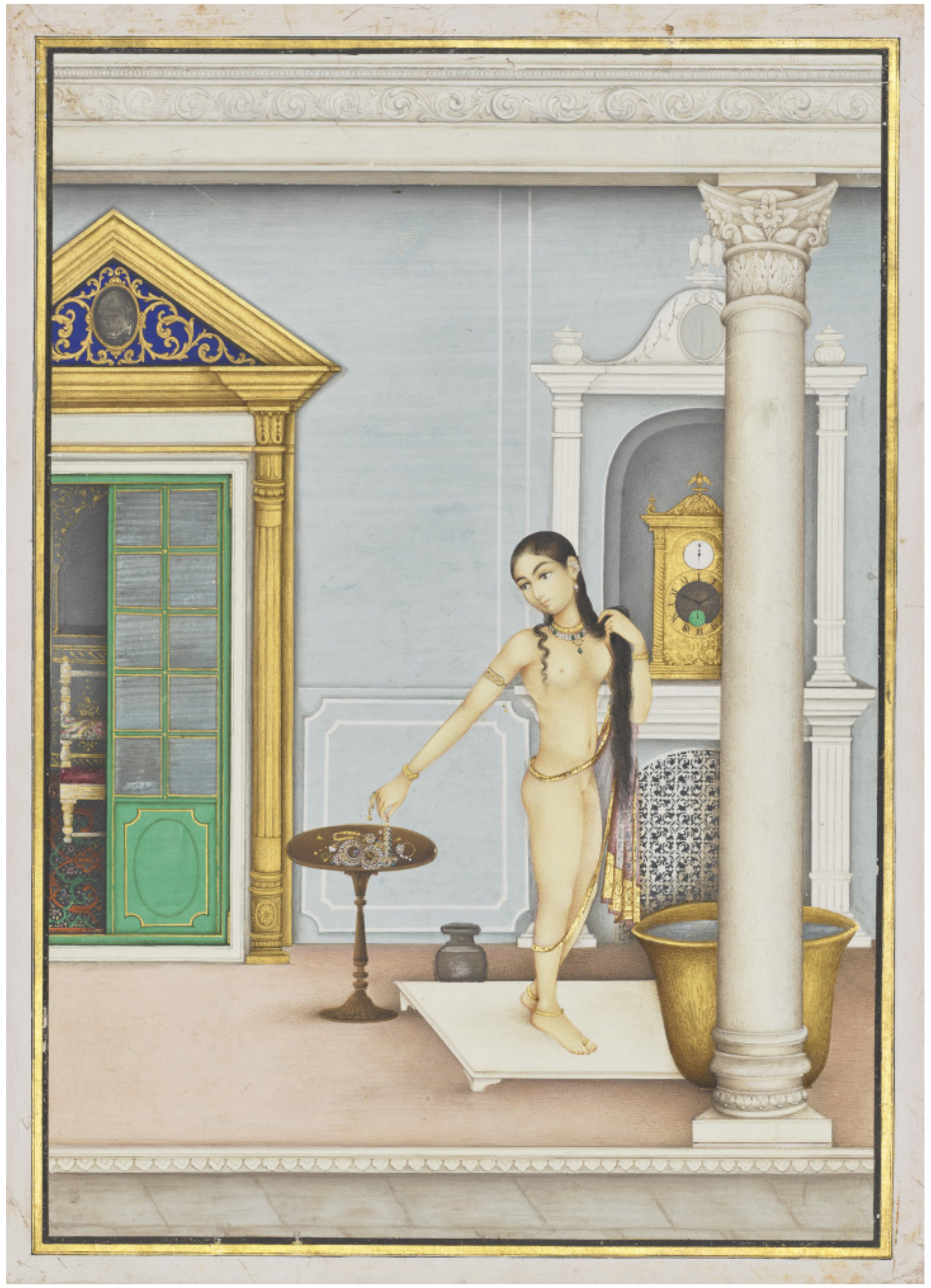
The lady's sharply defined profile suggests the work of a court atelier, where Mughal artistic conventions were adapted to local tastes, specifically those of the princely state of Alwar during the reign of Rao Bane Singh (r. 1815–1857).

Rao Bane Singh was a distinguished patron of the arts, deeply invested in the cultural and aesthetic enrichment of his court. Under his rule, Alwar flourished not only as a political centre but also as a vibrant hub of artistic production. He actively transformed the town and its royal collections, inviting some of the finest painters, calligraphers, and artisans from the Mughal capital of Delhi to work under his patronage. Among them were renowned artists such as Ghulam Ali Khan and Baldev, both of whom brought with them the refined techniques of the Mughal tradition, which they then blended with the bold, emotive style favoured in Rajasthan.

Bane Singh's patronage extended beyond painting to include literature and architecture, and he played a crucial role in shaping the cultural identity of Alwar in the early 19th century. A particularly notable example of his support for the arts is a portrait of the Rao himself by Baldev, now held in the British Library (Falk and Archer 1981, no. 534). His reign represents a key moment in the regional reinterpretation of Mughal aesthetics, one that contributed to a distinctive school of painting that balanced imperial finesse with local sensibilities.

For a closely related example, formerly in the James Ivory Collection, now in the Louvre Abu Dhabi, see Losty 2010, p.111, no.47. Also see another sold Bonhams, New York, 14 March 2016, lot 112.





***14**

A YOUNG WOMAN CHOOSING HER JEWELLERY AFTER BATHING

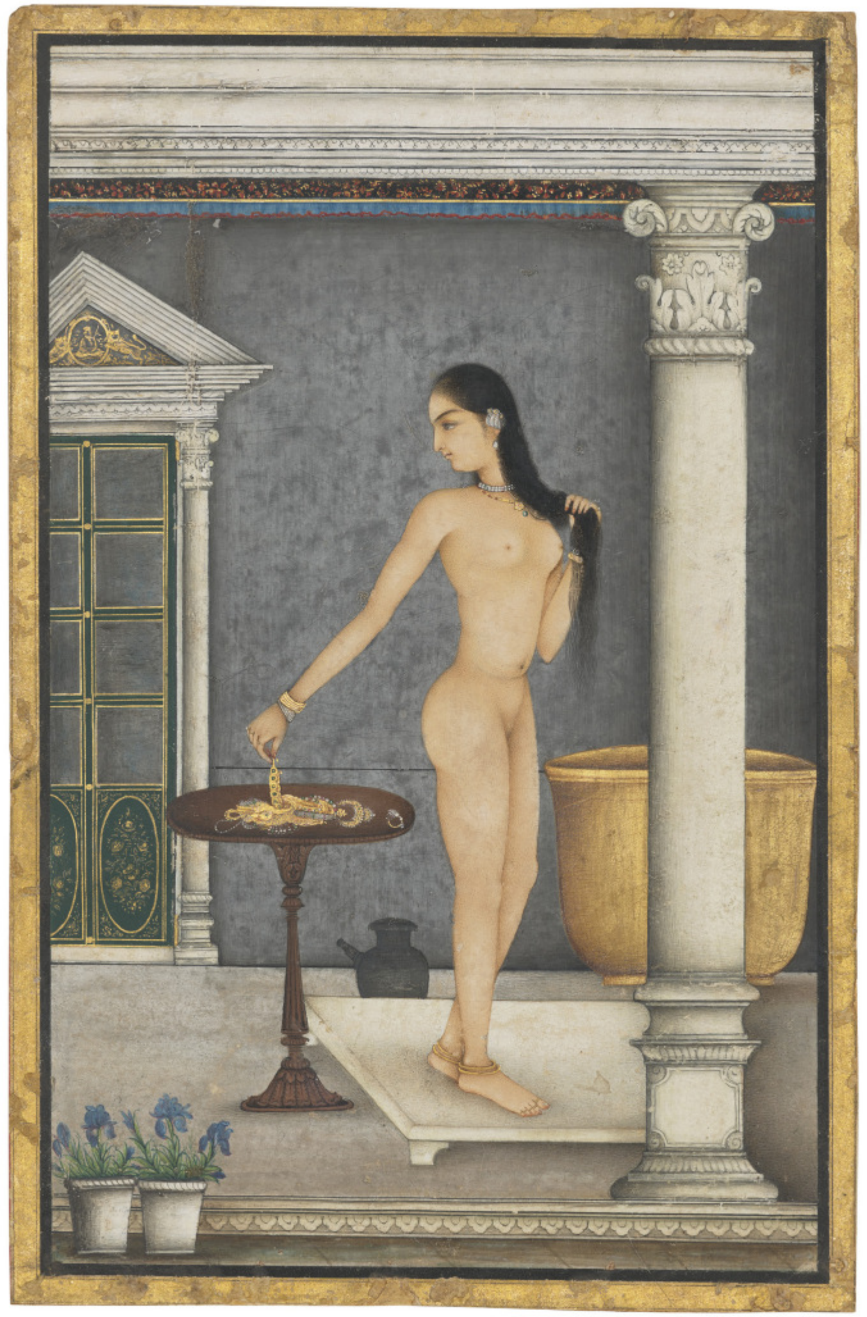
ALWAR OR DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1820-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on card, set within narrow black and gold borders, the margins pale pink with black outer rules, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 12⅜ x 8⅝in. (31.3 x 21.8cm.); folio 12⅞ x 9in. (32.6 x 23cm.)

£6,000-8,000
US$8,200-11,000
€7,000-9,200

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd., London, 1982

Here the young lady, fresh from bathing, stands gracefully on a small platform, nude, save for a translucent shawl with gold-embroidered borders, and retrieving her jewellery that is heaped on a circular table to her right. By contrast to the other two paintings from this group, lots 13 and 15, the female is diminutive within the interior, drawing inspiration from neoclassical design yet infused with regional opulence. The Corinthian column provides a dramatic visual punctuation in the foreground, bisecting the large brass water basin positioned directly in front of the low marble platform. An added touch of opulence includes a gold mantle clock framed within a faux fireplace and the green door is open, unlike in lots 13 and 15, to reveal further lavish furnishings of a golden chair and European style carpet. See lot 13 for further discussion of the genre of painting.



***15**

A YOUNG WOMAN CHOOSING HER JEWELLERY AFTER BATHING

ALWAR OR DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1820-30

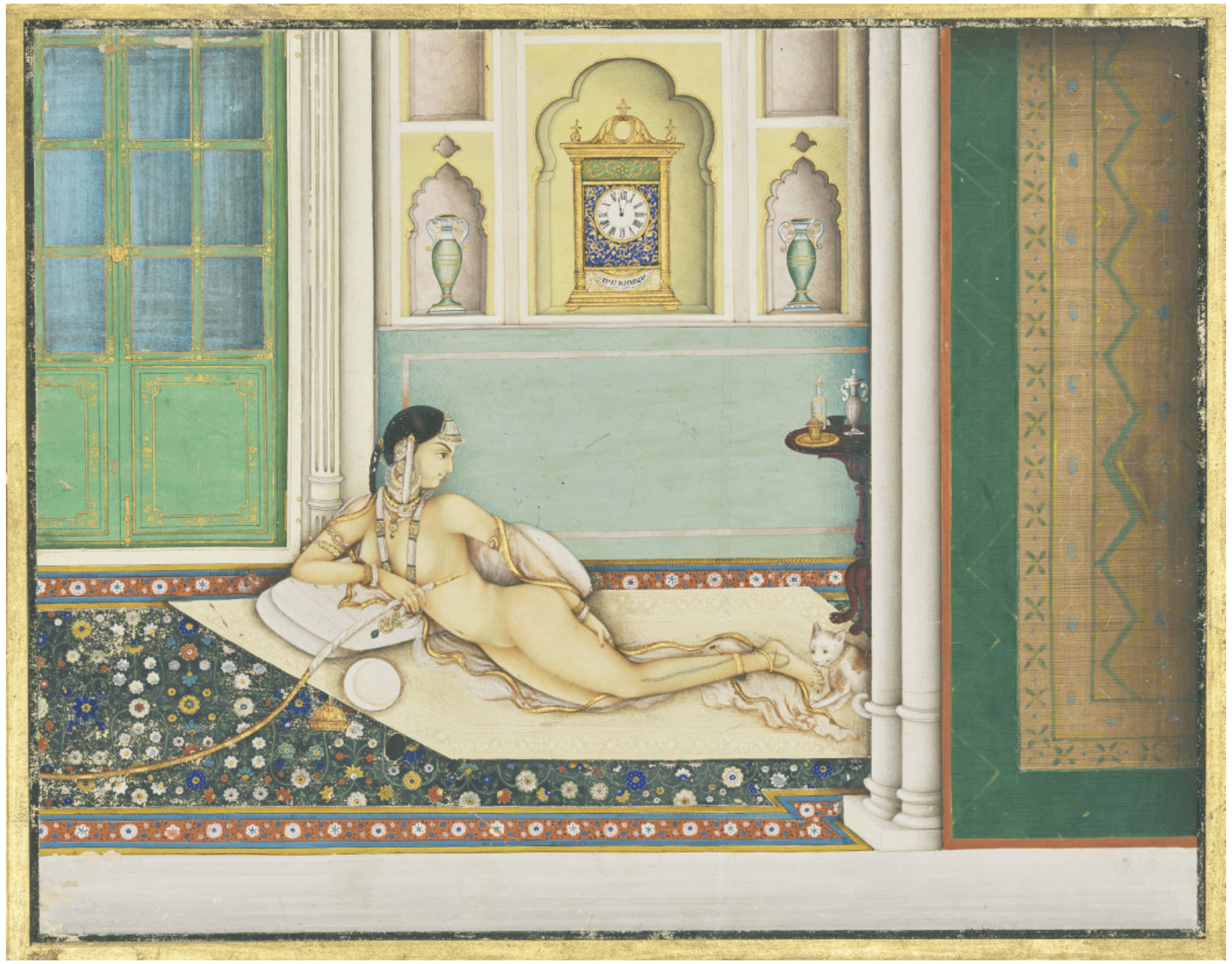
Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within narrow black and gold borders, laid down on card margins, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 4¾in. (18.9 x 12cm.); folio 11¼ x 8⅜in. (28.6 x 21.4cm.)

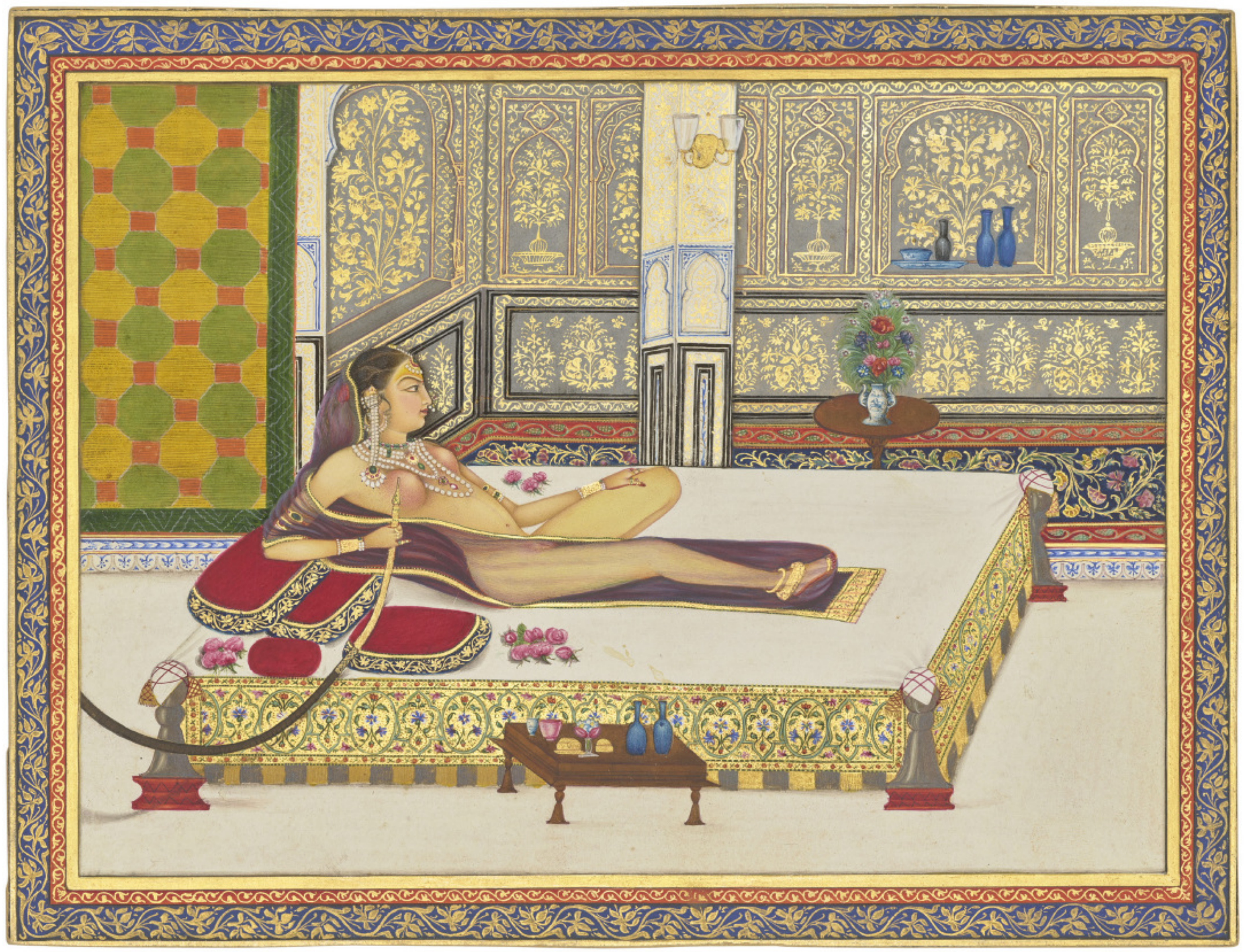
£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Spink and Son Ltd., London, 1981.

As in lots 13 and 14, here a young lady, fresh from her bath, stands gracefully on a small platform, completely nude, retrieving her jewellery that is heaped on a circular table to her right. The composition is identical to that of lot 13, save for certain decorative details on the door and pediment.

See lot 13 for further discussion of the genre of painting. The close similarities between the three present paintings and the example at the Louvre Abu Dhabi (see lot 13) suggests that they are the work of a single artist or studio.





*16

A YOUNG WOMAN RECLINING ON A CARPET WITH A CAT

ALWAR OR DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1820-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within black and gold borders, laid down on gold-speckled card, reverse plain, framed and glazed
Painting 7¾ x 9⅞in. (19.8 x 25.2cm.); folio 8⅜ x 10½in. (21.3 x 26.8cm.)

£7,000-10,000
US$9,600-14,000
€8,100-12,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's London, *Important Islamic, Indian and South-East Asian Manuscripts, Miniatures and Works of Art*, 11 April 1989, lot 104

This alluring and richly detailed composition relates closely to lots 13-15. In those the young woman is adorning herself after bathing, while here she is fully bedecked in her rich jewellery. Her hair, which was loose in lot 14 is now tied back tightly, and she is relaxing with a *huqqa* and her cat, perhaps awaiting the arrival of her lover. It relates particularly closely to lot 14, where there are close similarities in the figure, the diaphanous shawl and the interior, particularly the glass door and the European clock. The present scene could be seen as a thematic sequel to lot 14. Similar profiles of women are found in group scenes of nautch girls painted in Delhi in the early 19th century, especially one in the Victoria and Albert Museum (IS.9-1955), which shows a nautch performance in an interior with similar furnishing and architecture to the present work. Other related scenes of courtesans reclining in similar poses include lot 17 in this sale, as well as examples in the Harvard Art Museums (1995.137), San Diego Museum of Art (1990.923) and two attributed to Alwar illustrated in Brugière and Bor 2003, figs.77, 79, pp.140-1, in the Alwar Museum. A further example sold in these Rooms 5 May 1977, lot 87. Like the present example, one of those in the Alwar Museum includes a small cat. This has led some commentators to informally dub the artist the “cat master”.

*17

A YOUNG WOMAN RECLINING ON A DAYBED

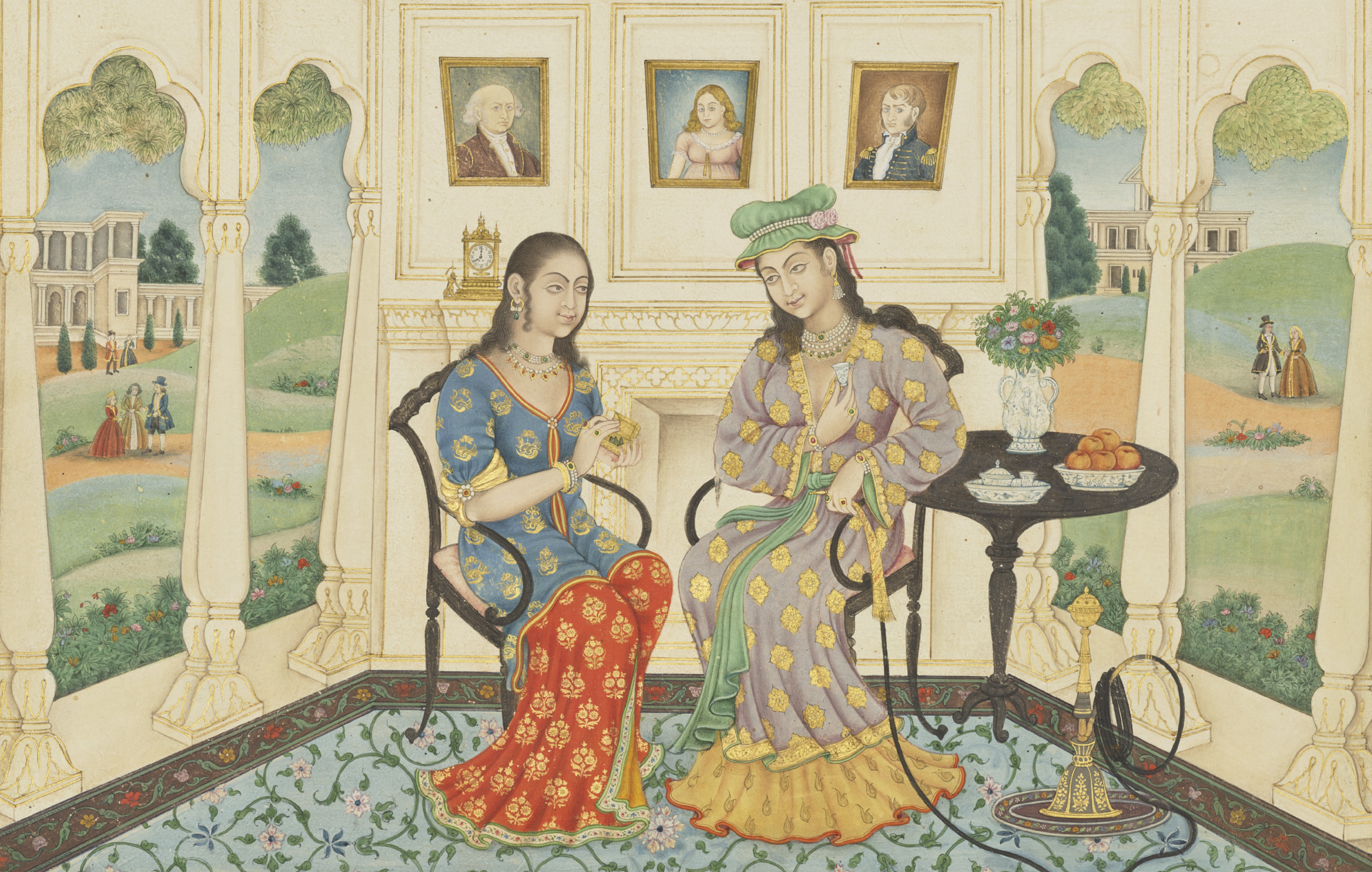
ALWAR OR DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1820-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within gold, red, and blue paper borders stencilled with gold scrolling vine, laid down on ivory margins, reverse plain with rough sketch of reclining figure, framed and glazed
Painting 6 x 8¼in. (15.3 x 21cm.); folio 10¼ x 12⅝in. (25.9 x 32cm.)

£7,000-10,000
US$9,600-14,000
€8,100-12,000

PROVENANCE:
Spink and Son Ltd., London, 1982

The heavily bejewelled woman depicted in the present work lies on a day-bed in an ornately decorated interior. The amount of detail in the furnishings and architectural decoration is remarkable, with rich textiles, including the woman's gold-edged darkly translucent shawl, red, gold and black cushions (beside which lie several roses), the embroidered gold valence (the surface of which is enlivened with pricking) and a European-style carpet. A flower-filled vase of blue and white porcelain with an equestrian image rests on a table, there is a European wall-lamp on the column, and the walls and columns are decorated all over with Mughal style gold floral designs. The figure of the woman here is similar to those in lots 13-16, and while the interiors of those examples are overtly Europeanised, the present composition combines both Mughal and European aspects. In this it displays an interesting variation on the themes and iconography in these five works and, like lots 13-16, underlines the artistic links around Alwar and Delhi in this period.



***18**

TWO WOMEN IN EXOTIC DRESS SEATED IN A PAVILION

MEWAR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, EARLY 19TH CENTURY

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, set within black margins, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 11⅜ x 16½in. (29 x 41.9cm.); folio 12⅝ x 17¼in. (32.2 x 43.9cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

LITERATURE:
A. Topsfield, "Ketelaar's embassy and the *farangi* theme in the art of Udaipur", *Oriental Art*, vol. XXX, No.4, Winter 1984, pp.363-4, fig.21

This is a superb example of the theme of the exotic that became a popular genre in 18th century Indian painting, especially in Mewar. It blends figures, textiles, objects, paintings, architecture and landscape of local, Western and Far Eastern inspiration into a captivating composition.

In 1711, an embassy of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) to the Mughal Court stopped en route at Udaipur. The embassy was led by Johan Josua Ketelaar and their reception in Udaipur by Maharana Sangram Singh (r.1710-34) is depicted in several paintings including two now in the Victoria & Albert Museum (09405(IS) and 09316(IS)) and another in the Rijksmuseum (NG-1987-7). Topsfield writes that this must have been one of the earliest European visits to the traditionalist and politically isolated Rajput court of Udaipur (Topsfield 1984, p.350). This visit, and no doubt that of other Dutch *farangis* (or 'Franks', a term used broadly and often unsympathetically to refer to the French, Portuguese, Dutch and English) made a lasting impression on the imagination of the artists of Udaipur and seeded a fascination for a theme of the exotic which continued over the course of a century.

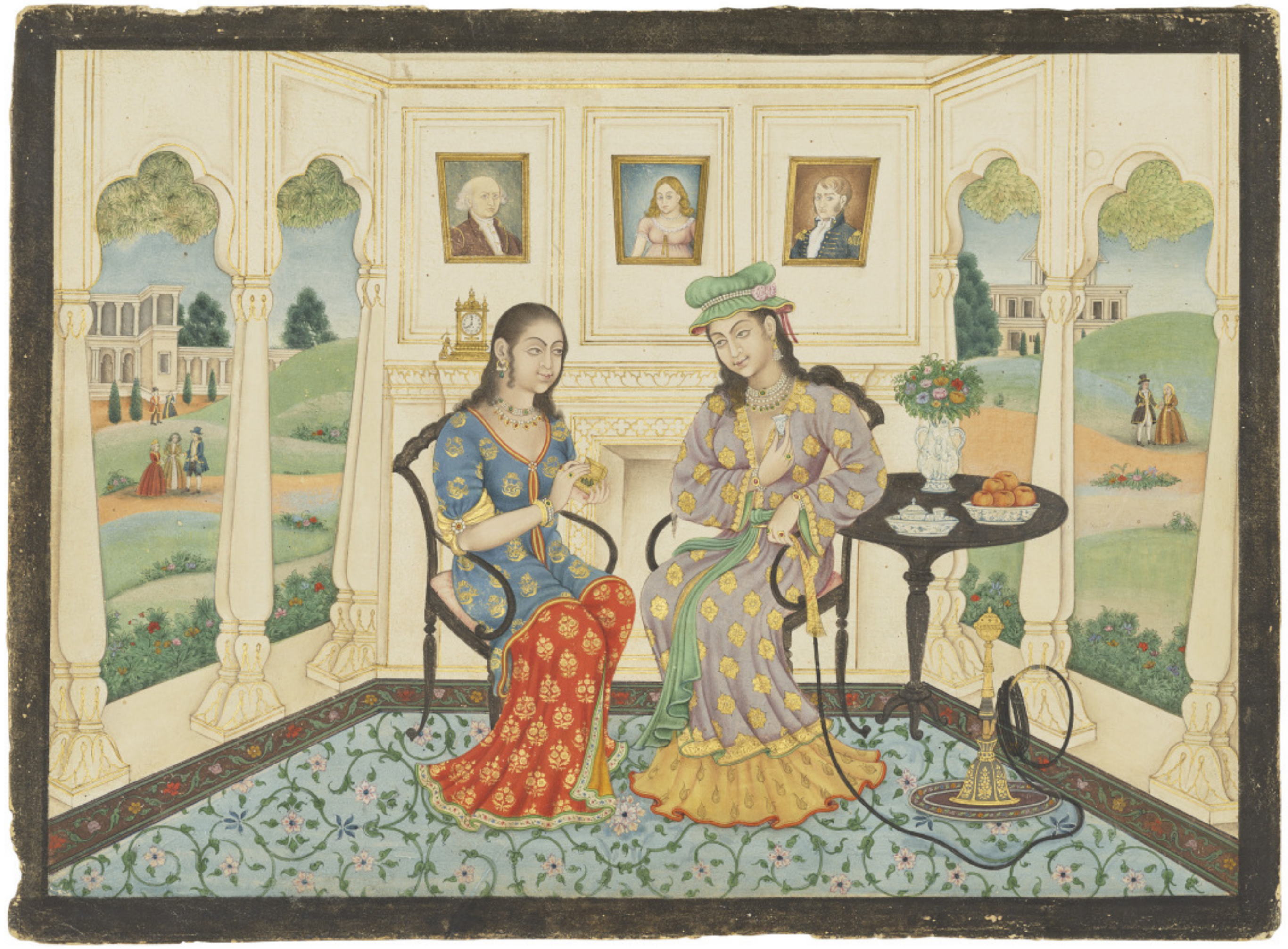
This theme wasn't new to South Asian art. Stephen Markel writes that "exotic foreigners and otherworldly anthropomorphized creatures have been often depicted as caricatures with exaggerated features and convoluted postures, and frequently wearing misunderstood foreign or hybrid garb. In Indian paintings of the later 16th through 19th centuries, there was a renewed interest in portraying bizarre-looking outlanders, as well as comical Indians… Painters took evident delight in depicting such literally 'outlandish' characters, often as stereotypes and stock motifs. These seemingly humorous or satirical observations of the 'Other' could be termed Occidentalism, an Asian corollary of Orientalism…" (Markel 2015).

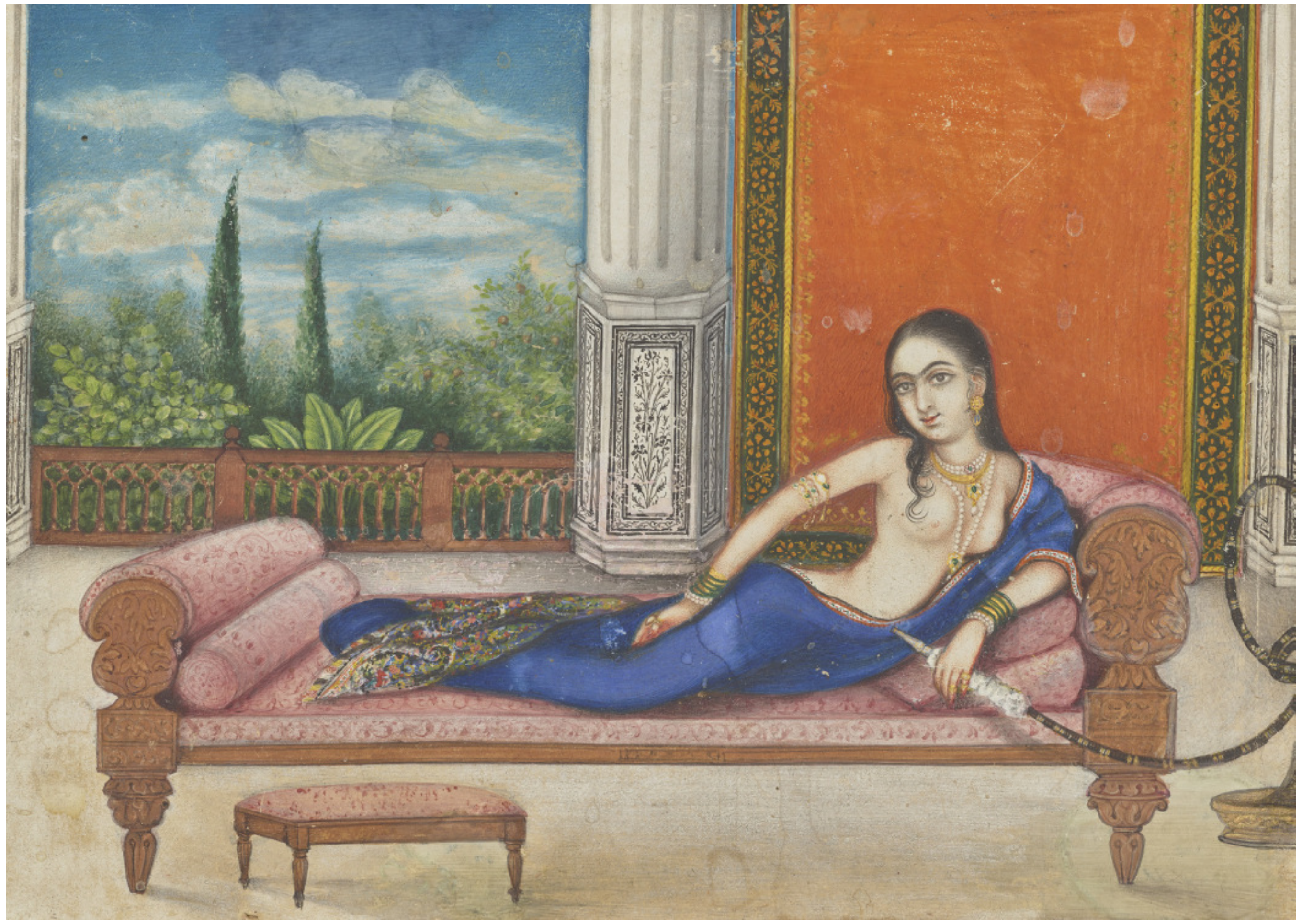
This painting perfectly exemplifies this genre – intentionally blending exotic worlds – that of the European *farangi* with Chinese and local influences. In his pioneering essay on these *farangi* paintings, Andrew Topsfield describes ours of one of the "last flights of fancy of the *firangi* theme which had begun over a century earlier following the visit of Ketelaar's embassy" (Topsfield 1984, p.363, fig,21). In this composition, both ladies, whose faces seem drawn from Chinese export reverse glass paintings, sit on Regency chairs wearing robes of Chinese silk. The lady on the right wears a European cap and rests her arm on a Georgian tripod table, upon which rests a selection of blue and white porcelain - the flower vase clearly painted with Persian figures. In her hand is the mouth piece of a *huqqa* – elegantly inlaid in gold – and as she sits, her companion offers her *paan* from a gold box. Behind them a clock, German or French in origin, sits upon the mantlepiece beneath three European portraits. The building in which they sit has a very Mughal colonnade of cusped arches but beyond them lies European palatial architecture – adorned with classical columns. Diminutive figures, wearing early 19th century European dress pepper the landscape, strolling amongst the gently rolling hills.

The sources of influence are varied and plentiful. One that is particularly distinct is the source of the architecture of the background and the figures within it, which relate closely to European prints, specifically a series of prints of London by George Sayer which were published in the 1750s (examples are in the British Museum, acc. nos.1880,113.2296; 1880,1113.2456; 188,1113.2393; 1880,1113.1836). These prints all use the same compositional approach with small groups of figures promenading in a wide panorama with distant buildings and small trees. The costume of the small figures in our painting seem more in keeping with a date closer to 1800 than the 1750s date of the prints, indicating that our artist was using these as one of many points of reference.

In their publication on the artists Bagta and Chokha, Beach and Singh illustrate one of these prints, depicting the Great Pleasure Pavilion and Garden at Ranelagh along with a direct copy of it done in Devgarh in the first half of the 19th century, both now collection of Nahar Singh II of Devgarh. This demonstrates the access that the artists of Devgarh had to such prints (Beach and Singh 2005, p.88, figs.104-5). One might also consider also that our artist may have been inspired by colonial architecture experienced first hand, closer to home.

The closest comparable to our painting is a depiction of *Exotic Farangi Ladies* which was published alongside ours in Topsfield's article (1984) and was recently sold as part of the Stuart Cary Welch sale at Sotheby's, 25 October 2023, lot 47. Welch attributed that work to a Deccani-trained Mewar artist (Welch and Mastellar 2004, p.175), and Andrew Topsfield attributed it, at least in part, to Chokha, suggesting that it might have been painted for either Maharana Bhim Singh of Udaipur (r.1778-1828) or Rawat Gokul Das of Devgarh (r.1786-1821). Chokha worked at the court in Udaipur until 1811. Beach writes that he developed a style of great wit, and drew from a range of subjects and stylistic influences that suited the Udaipur patronage more than his native Devgarh. Other paintings by Chokha showing the influence of European works include two paintings after a 17th century work by Georges de la Tour of St. Anne and the Christ Child (Art Gallery of Ontario, published Beach and Singh 2005, fig.102A). The versions by Chokha are in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the collection of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava (Beach and Singh 2005, fig.102 and Welch 1978, no.59). The Cary Welch painting bore a number of hallmarks of Chokha's work – such as the heavy stippling on the chins of the ladies. Ours certainly follows in Chokha's witty style and is likely to be by an artist strongly influenced by him. For more information on Chokha and his style see Beach 2011, pp. 733-752; Topsfield *2002,* and Beach and Nahar Singh, 2005.





***19**

A YOUNG WOMAN RECLINING ON A COUCH

DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1810-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within narrow green borders with scrolling foliate motif on salmon pink, laid down on card mount, framed and glazed
Painting 4½ x 6⅜in. (11.4 x 16.1cm.); folio 4⅞ x 6¾in. (12.5 x 17.3cm.)

£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

This painting is an excellent example of the increasing European influence on Delhi society in the 19thcentury. There are many details indicative of Western styles beginning to cohabit with more traditionally Indian interiors. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, "there was no tradition of ordinary seat furniture" (Skelton 1982, p.167) and elevated chairs were to be used only for Gods and kings. Here, the woman is reclining on a European-style daybed while smoking a traditional hookah, demonstrating comingling influences. Furniture became more "elaborately carved" (op.cit, p.167) as Indian ivory workers turned their skilled attention to the imported designs. An Anglo-Indian rosewood sofa with similarly carved and constructed legs was offered in these Rooms, 22 November 2011, lot 420, placing the painting firmly in the early to mid-19th century.

The marble pillar in the background is inlaid with a floral design and a scrolling border. The best known example of such a design is located in the Diwan-i-Khass in the Red Fort in Delhi. While not identical, there are borrowed features which may have served as inspiration for those in our painting and confirm the Delhi origin.

The pose was clearly popular, as another portrait in the Chester Beatty Library (acc.no.7.1707) features a woman in a near identical position. Their features are similar with both facing directly to the artist, instead of profile. This again demarcates a departure from Mughal painting towards the Company school style in alignment with the period.

***20**

A YOUNG WOMAN AT HER TOILETTE ON A TERRACE

DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1800-20

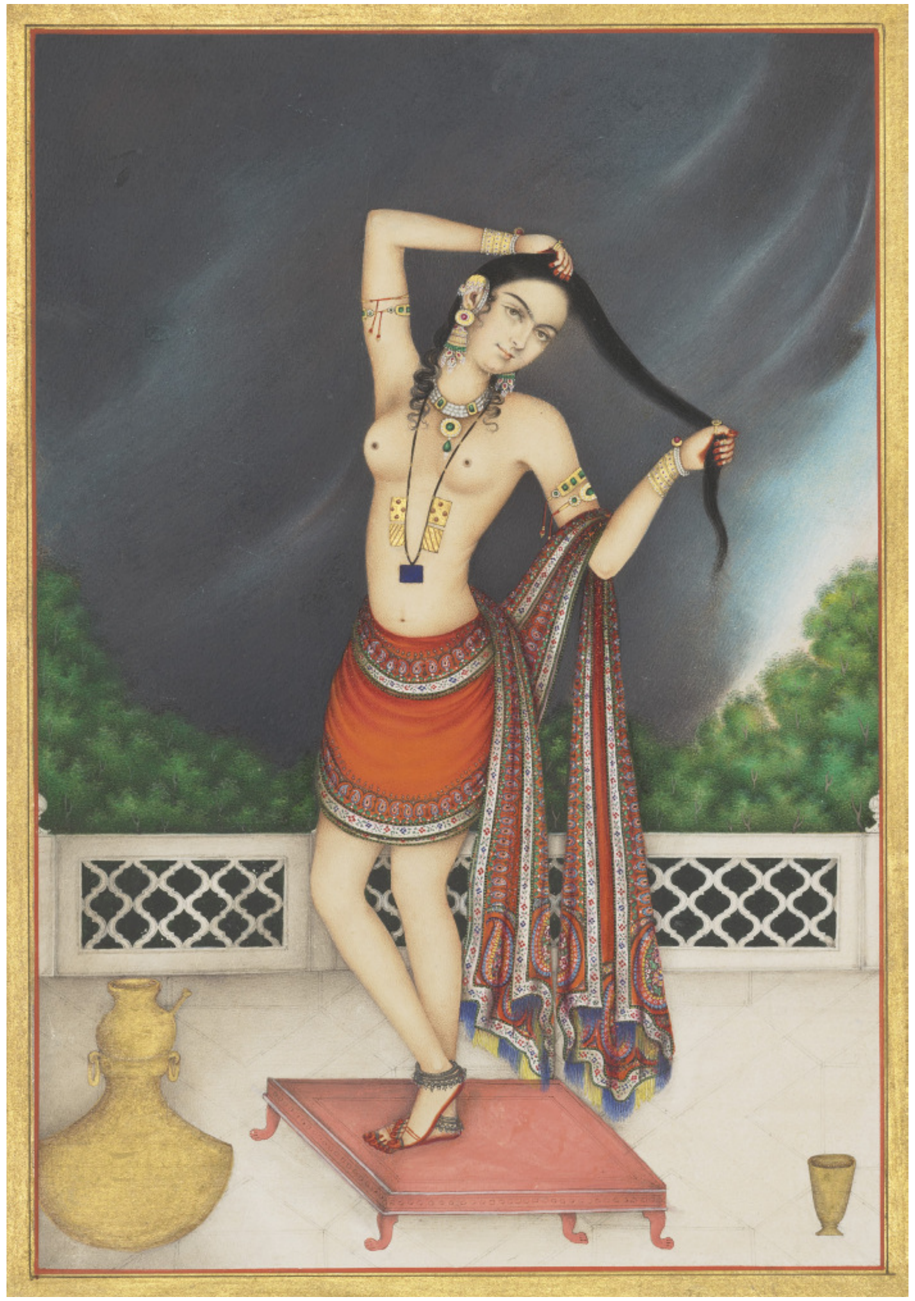
Opaque pigments heightened with gold on card, set within gold and black borders, the off-white margins plain with light outer rules, reverse plain with old collection numbers, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 6⅞ x 4⅝in. (17.5 x 11.8cm.); folio 11 x 7⅞in. (27.9 x 20cm.)

£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1982

A woman, richly adorned with jewellery, stands on her *chauki*, at her toilette. Here, our figure wears emerald and diamond *jhumkhas*, bazubands, and anklets. Around her neck hangs a long necklace with a sapphire and gold enamelled pendants. Her fingertips and feet are painted with *mehndi*, a traditional red dye, complementing the red details of the striking shawl wrapped around her waist. Further lavish details, including a large gold water vessel and cup, fill the foreground.

This popular theme appears throughout Delhi painting, depicting scenes of women performing ablutions and cleansing themselves. The pose, a shawl draped over her arm and her hand in her hair, closely relates to lots 13-15 in this sale, and the iconography and stylistic aspects show the links between Delhi and Alwar painting at this time.



***21**

THE HOUR OF COW DUST (KRISHNA AND RADHA)

KISHANGARH, INDIA, CIRCA 1800

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, fragmentary yellow borders, reverse plain with old inventory numbers, mounted
Miniature 9 x 5⅞in. (22.7 x 14.9cm.)

£10,000-15,000
US$14,000-20,000
€12,000-17,000

PROVENANCE:
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures and Manuscripts, Islamic Works of Art, and 19th Century Paintings*, 15 December 1978, lot 121

This wonderfully expressive composition captures the devotional essence of the *bhakti* tradition, celebrating the eternal love of Krishna and Radha. Set within a richly detailed pastoral scene, the painting is infused with both spiritual intensity and visual delight.

Depicting a passage taken from the Garga Samhita (vv.2.10.1-25), this painting illustrates Krishna and Balarama accompanied by Radha as they return from pastures with the cows. This dusk scene is often referred to as the hour of "cow dust" (*go-dhuli*)(vv.2.10-24.25), Krishna is often described lyrically as being covered in the cows' dust at the end of the day. Another Kishangarh painting of *go-dhuli* close in date to ours is illustrated in Ku and Lee 1994, p. 125, no. 90. Further, a painting related to this time of day is found in the Harvard Art Museum (acc. no.1960.160). Balarama often appears in paintings of Krishna during his time in Vrindavan as his younger brother and fellow cowherd. He is mentioned by name in this passage in the opening verse. We can assume that Radha, while often not mentioned by name, is the gopi who appears here. In Hindu tradition, Radha occupies the position of Krishna's divine companion, wife, and lover.

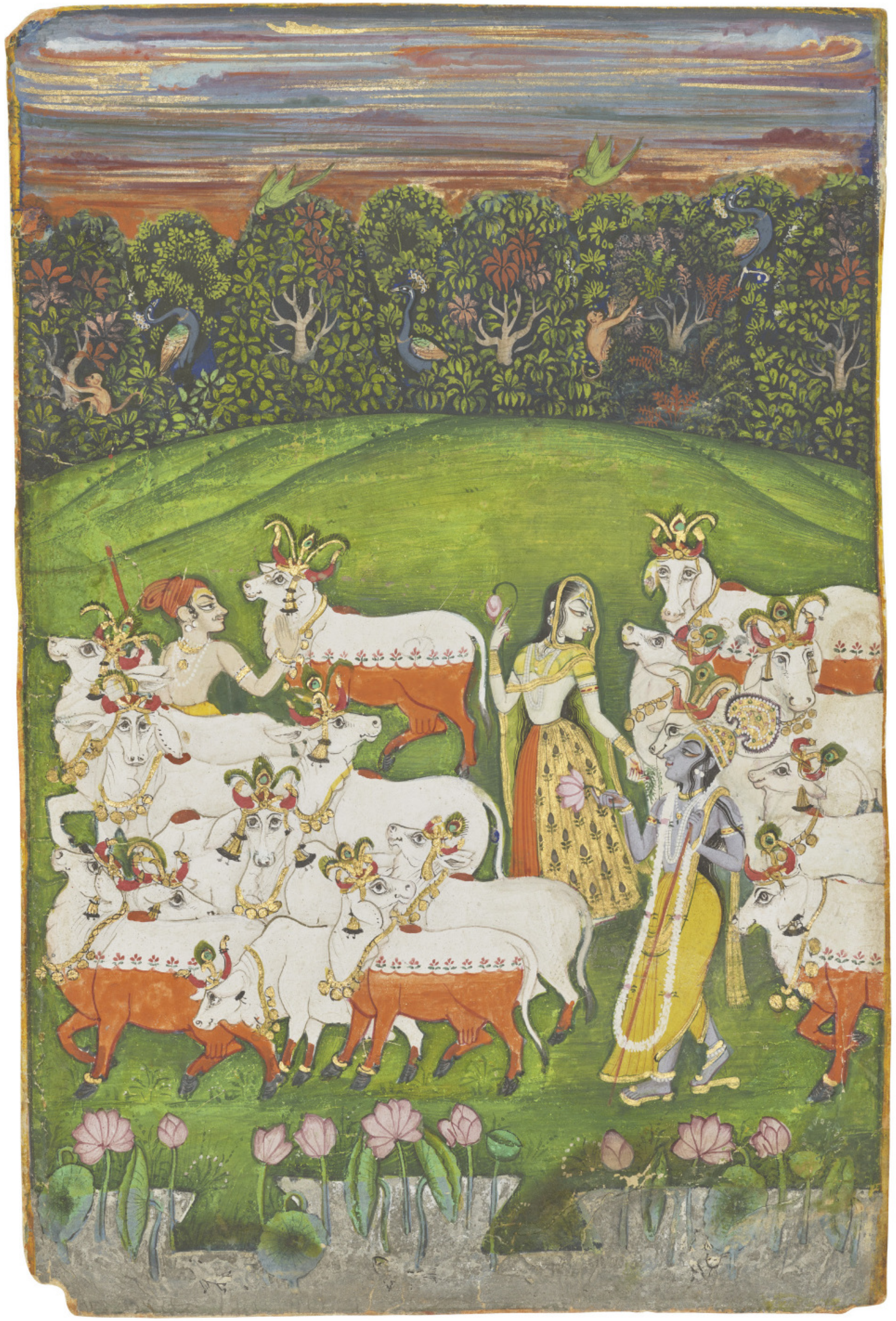
The cows here are adorned with "glittering gold necklaces, a network of small bells, and tinkling anklets" (2.10.3) and "their horns were plated with gold" (v.2.10.5). This level of ornamentation reflects the regional aesthetic and the devotional attention lavished on sacred cattle in Kishangarh painting. The herd are painted in red *tilaka* with floral motifs along their sides. The Kishangarh tradition of painting their horses ready for battle has translated here into the painting of the cows but does not bear the same military connotations. Adding a comic element, several of the cows turn their heads to face the viewer. This successfully lightens the painting and adds a playful dynamic. They are further decorated with peacock feathers placed between their horns. The peacock feather is usually associated with Krishna, many narratives claim that it was given to him by Radha as a symbol of her love. Indeed, peacocks feature in the forest behind them. This strengthens Krishna's affinity with the cows and heightens the underlying romantic tones of the painting.

Krishna is immediately recognisable in blue. In the Bhagavata Purana, one of the most important Hindu texts, he is described as "wearing a yellow garment, adorned with a wreath of flowers" (32.2). Radha, clothed in colours which complement Krishna's robes, extends her open hand towards him, proffering a sprig. The lotus in Radha's other hand has closed its petals in the dusk, signalling the end of the day.

In addition to the pair of lotuses clutched in the lovers' hands, there is a pair of parakeets and monkeys in the forest behind them. This use of pairing often serves as an emphatic technique to hint at the romance within a piece. The forest landscape is lush and densely packed with many different shrubs and trees, this is alluded to in Garga Samhita in vv.11-13 where the types of trees are listed extensively emphasising the verdant nature of the setting.

In the foreground, cultivated lotus beds interrupt the foreshore at sharply cut angles, a compositional device frequently used in Kishangarh works to guide the viewer's eye into the narrative. An earlier related composition is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum (IS.40-1980), illustrated in Balraj Khanna, Krishna: The Divine Lover, London, 1997, no. 36. See also a festive Kishangarh scene sold at Bonhams, New York, 22 March 2024, lot 870, for a comparable treatment of devotional procession and bucolic splendor.

This painting fits within the Kishangarh style of the late eighteenth century. Artists such as Nihal Chand developed the distinctive Kishangarh style under the reign of Maharaja Savant Singh. The depiction of heightened physical beauty became a priority and "consorts Krishna and Radha were depicted together in idyllic landscape and palace settings" (Topsfield and Beach, 1991, p.96). The warm sunset colours of the sky are similar in a number of related paintings, one can be found in The Cincinnati Art Museum (acc.no. 2007.84). The elongated, almond-shaped eyes were typical of this period and can be seen in a painting of the Maharaja attributed to Nihal Chand in The Cleveland Museum of Art (acc.no.2001.172). In a turn of events that inversely mirrors Krishna and Radha's journey, Savant Singh and his consort Bani Thani retired to Vrindavan. This could explain why there was such emphasis placed on these lyrical, poetic paintings under his reign.



*22

LADIES WITH FIREWORKS ON A TERRACE

KISHANGARH, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1730-40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, within gold rules on buff paper borders, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 8¾ x 6¼in. (22.2 x 15.8cm.); folio 13 x 9⅝in. (33.1 x 24.5cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

Christian Humann, Pan Asian Collection, before 1984
Sotheby's London, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures,* 15 October 1984, lot 56

EXHIBITED:

Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.115, p.154
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.115, p.154

This refined and atmospheric painting captures a quiet but dazzling moment of courtly celebration. On a marble terrace beneath a clear, starlit sky, two elegantly dressed women hold sparklers over an oval, scalloped-edge pool. In the distance, a line of fireworks lights up the horizon, casting the nocturnal scene in golden bursts of festivity. The composition is symmetrical, poised, and imbued with an air of intimacy and grace. As Sheila Canby notes, "the mood is one of elegance and quiet festivity, an intimate moment of courtly leisure captured with symmetry and grace."

Painted during a period of political fragmentation following the death of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, this work reflects the shift in elite taste from imperial grandeur to romantic nostalgia and refined sociability. Although the Mughal court's influence waned throughout the 18th century, the reign of Muhammad Shah (1719–1748) marked a brief but vital revival in artistic patronage. Court painters turned increasingly to themes of nocturnal leisure, terrace scenes, and the pleasures of private celebration. The present painting is emblematic of that transition: its subject is not heroic, but celebratory; its focus not on grandeur, but on elegance and beauty.

Though long associated with stylistic traits found in the later Mughal oeuvre, particularly those attributed to Govardhan II, known for his delicate rendering of fashionable women and symmetrical terrace scenes, the painting's deeper affinities lie with the distinctive aesthetic of the Kishangarh school. In particular, the composition resonates strongly with the work of Bhavanidas, the seminal artist who helped define the Kishangarh style during the mid-18th century.

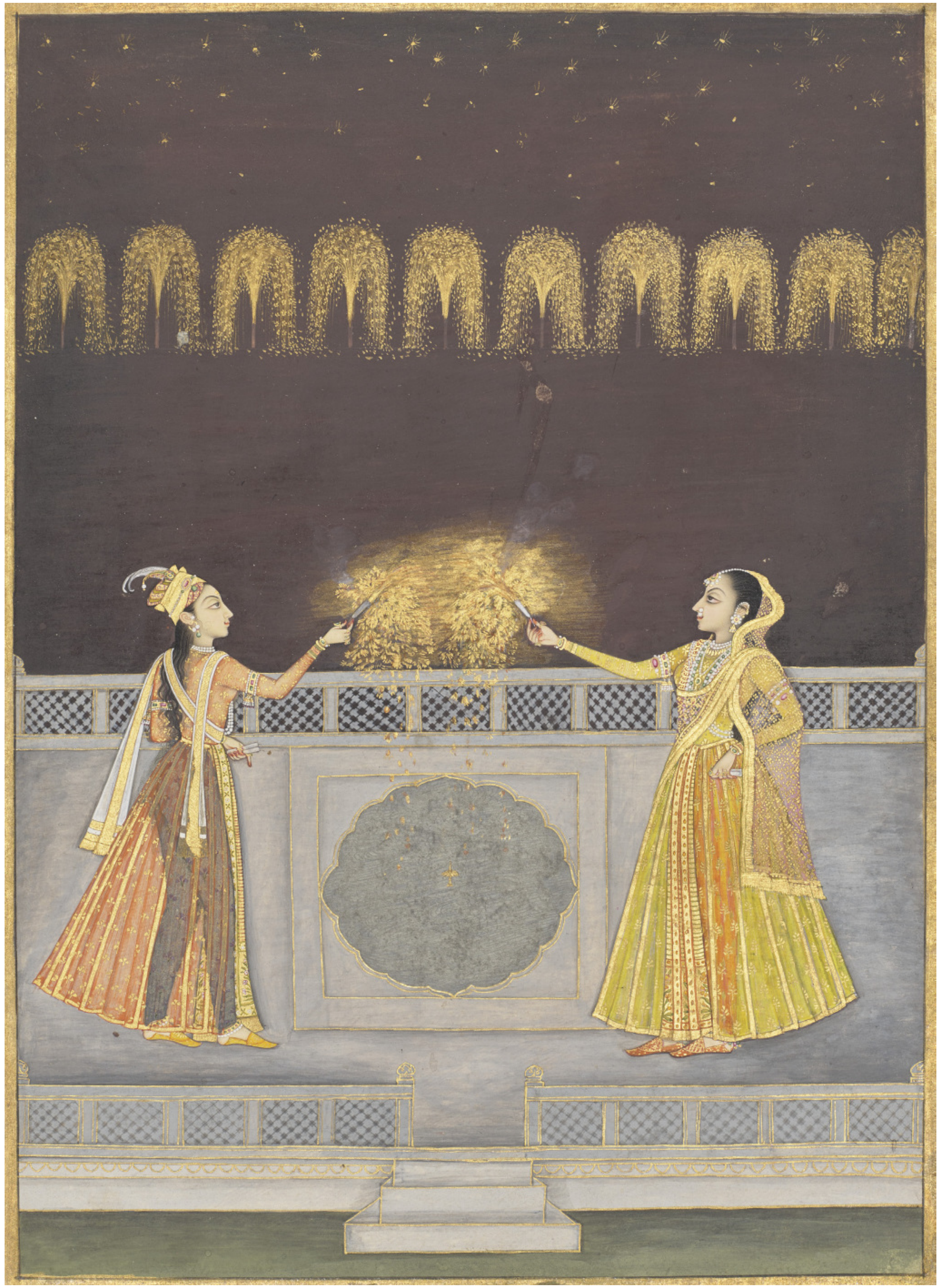
Bhavanidas was trained at the Mughal court and brought his refined technique to Kishangarh in 1719, during the reign of Raja Rai Singh (1706–1748). His arrival marked a critical moment in the evolution of the Kishangarh atelier, laying the groundwork for the school's characteristic blend of Mughal realism and poetic idealism. As Milo Beach and others have noted, Bhavanidas' impact on Rajput painting was profound. Stuart Cary Welch described him as a figure whose "powers of emotional expression, satire, and caricature were beyond the reach of other Rajput artists." Navina Haidar, in her contributions to Garden and Cosmos and other publications, further underscores his role in shaping Kishangarh's signature themes of courtly intimacy, lyrical romance, and ethereal beauty.

Stylistically, this painting shares many hallmarks of Bhavanidas' hand. The women's diaphanous *saris*, trimmed with vertical gold banding, the long, slender arms, and the idealized facial features—small, oval faces with delicately rendered hairlines, are all characteristic. The left-hand figure's unkempt, flowing tresses and the buckling of the head scarf of the figure on the right are seen in other works attributed to Bhavanidas, such as the *Night of Revery* from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection (Sotheby's London, 31 May 2011, lot 20) and the *holi* celebration from the Sven Gahlin Collection (Sotheby's London, 6 October 2015, lot 56) further reinforcing the attribution. The flat perspective of the terrace architecture, with its central steps and elevation, also aligns with his known visual language.

While later Kishangarh painting is often associated with Nihal Chand and his iconic depictions of Bani Thani, it was Bhavanidas who established the visual vocabulary of feminine elegance and introspective charm that became the hallmark of the school. This painting is a prime example of that vision, its palette restrained but luminous, its mood celebratory yet serene.

This composition has also been recognized in broader scholarly and curatorial circles; it was featured on the back cover of the 1998 catalogue of *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, highlighting its significance within the canon of Indian court painting and its enduring appeal as a work of exceptional refinement.

Taken together, this painting is an evocative and historically resonant example of mid-18th-century Indian court art. It bridges the refined aesthetics of the late Mughal atelier with the emerging romanticism of Kishangarh, and stands as a luminous testament to Bhavanidas' singular role in shaping one of the subcontinent's most poetic artistic traditions.



*23

PORTRAIT OF SHAH ABU'L-MA'ALI OF KASHGAR

THE PORTRAIT BY DUST MUHAMMAD THE PAINTER, MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1555-64;
THE CALLIGRAPHY SIGNED MUHAMMAD REZA, 16TH CENTURY

Opaque pigments on paper, the crouching figure holding a sheet identifying the subject and signed by the artist, laid down within blue border and gold and blue rules, plain ivory margins, reverse with 6ll. fine black *nasta'liq* on marbled and gilded paper, laid down within blue and gold rules on pink, green and blue borders, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5⅝ x 6⅞in. (14.3 x 17.4cm.); calligraphy panel 7 x 3⅞in. (17.9 x 9.7cm.); folio 15¼ x 9⅞in. (38.9 x 25cm.)

£500,000-700,000
US$680,000-950,000
€580,000-810,000

PROVENANCE:

William Dent (1761-1833) or his brother John Dent, Bengal, India and England
By descent to Sir Annesley Wilkinson Robert Dent, C.B. (1895-1983), England
Sotheby's London, *An Interesting Collection of Oriental Miniatures, The Property of Sir A.W Robert Dent*, 11 April 1972, lot 18

EXHIBITED:

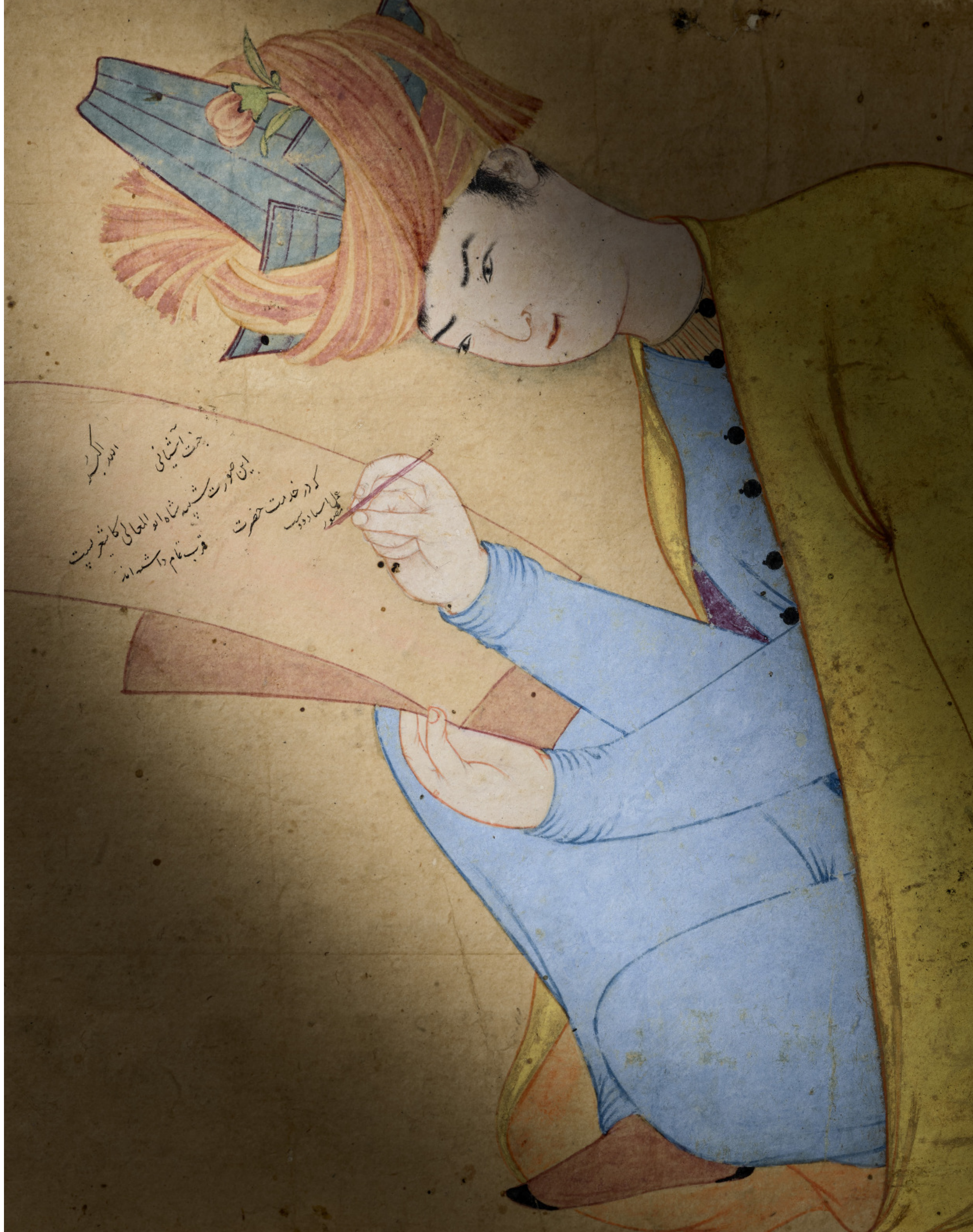
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Treasures of Islam, Musée Rath, Geneva, 1985
Akbar's India, Asia Society, New York; Harvard University Art Museums; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1985-6
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Chefs-d'oeuvre islamiques de l'Aga Khan Museum, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2007-08

LITERATURE:

P. Chandra, *The Tutinama of the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Origins of Mughal Painting*, Graz, 1976, p.16
S.C. Welch, *Wonders of the Age, Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting*, Cambridge, MA., 1979, no.75, pp.194-5
M. Dickson and S.C. Welch, *The Houghton Shahnama*, Cambridge, MA., 1981, vol.I, pp. 123 and 248, footnote no.27
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, pp.146-8
T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam*, Geneva and London, 1985, cat.118, p.144
M. Brand and G. Lowry, *Akbar's India, Art from the Mughal City of Victory*, New York, 1985, no.81, pp.125, 157
M.C. Beach, *Early Mughal Painting*, Cambridge MA., 1987, fig.11, pp.23-4
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.6, pp.34-5
C. Adle, "Les artistes nommés Dust-Mohammad au XVIe siècle", *Studia Iranica* 22/2, 1993, pp.272-75, fig.16
C. Adle, "DUST-MOHAMMAD MOSAWWER", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, VII/ 6, pp.602-03
R. Skelton, "Iranian Artists in the Service of Humayun", in S. Canby (ed.), *Humayun's Garden Party*, Marg, Mumbai, 1994, p.42
H. Elgood, "Who Painted Princes of the House of Timur", in S. Canby (ed.), *Humayun's Garden Party,* Marg, Mumbai, 1994, p.25
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.77, pp.107-08
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients*, Zurich, 1998, no.14, pp.54-5
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.77, pp.107-08
S. Makariou (ed.), *Chefs-d'oeuvre islamiques de l'Aga Khan Museum*, Paris, 2007, cat.60, pp.168-9
J. Bloom and S. Blair, *The Grove Encyclopaedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, Oxford, 2009, vol.2, p.40
L. Parodi and B. Wannell, "The Earliest Datable Mughal Painting", asianart.com online journal, 2011, fig.6
L. Parodi, "Tracing the Rise of Mughal Portraiture", in C. Branfoot (ed.), *Portraiture in South Asia since the Mughals*, London, 2018, fig.2.1, p.53
L. Parodi, "Shah Abu Ma'ali, Mir Sayyid Ali and the Sayyids of Tirmiz", *Muqarnas*, vol.35, 2018, pp.125-43, fig.1 and cover ill.

INSCRIPTIONS:

The paper held by the subject reads, 'God is Great. Jannat Ashtiani. This portrait is a likeness of Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali of Kashgar, whom his Majesty keeps close to him in royal service. The work of Master Dust the Painter'
The calligraphy on the reverse, ' You have become afflicted by that coquette | You have become a friends of sorrows and pains | You have the bowl of your eye in your hand | Saying "I have become a beggar from seeing you" His slave Muhammad Reza'



This outstanding portrait is one of the most significant early Mughal paintings and a pivotal work in the history and development of the Mughal school. Signed by the painter Dust Muhammad, it is one of an extremely small number of works that survive from the very earliest years of Mughal painting in the 1550s and early 1560s. It has been described as "intensely observed" (Brand and Lowry 1985, p.157), and "exquisite in its variety of textures and breathtaking combination of vivid colours" (Parodi 2018B, pp.56-7). The painter Dust Muhammad was a master in the royal ateliers of both the Safavid Emperor Shah Tahmasp (1514-1576) and the Mughal Emperor Humayun (1508-1556). The subject of the portrait, Shah Abu'l- Ma'ali was a favourite courtier of Emperor Humayun, who rebelled early in the reign of Akbar. The combination of artistic and political history which the portrait embodies, as well as the remarkable and striking pose, the scale of the figure and the distinctive palette, have made it an iconic work in Indian art.

THE PORTRAIT AND INSCRIPTION

Dust Muhammad has portrayed Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali bent forward in the act of writing on a large sheet of paper supported on a wooden board held in his left hand and resting on his right knee. He wears a bright yellow coat that drapes on the ground behind him, and a blue robe, with a striped shirt visible at the neck. On his head he wears a turban of the distinctive form associated with Emperor Humayun's entourage (the *taj-i izzat,* "crown of honour"), with a flower held in the folds. The quality of the portrait is breathtaking. The long, pure curve of the figure's neck and back that so defines the image, as well as the long curves of the front edge of his yellow coat and the sleeve, are drawn with extraordinary elegance, precision and sureness of hand. A similar level of precision is seen in the ripples and shading of the folds and creases in the drapery, especially the rumpled cuff of the sleeve and coat-ends on the ground behind him. The palette and colour-composition is striking, dominated by the contrasting yellow of the coat, blue of the robe and pale skin tones of the face and hands. It is a powerful image that indelibly imprints itself on the eye of the viewer.

The inscription that the sitter has just finished writing (see translation above) and its relation to the biographies of Abu'l-Ma'ali and Dust Muhammad are key elements in understanding the portrait, and the interrelation of these factors has generated interesting art historical discussions. In summary: Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali was a close companion of Humayun and here he is pictured wearing the Humayuni turban, which was discontinued after Humayun's death in January 1556. Early in the reign of Akbar he rebelled against the new emperor. The formula *Jannat Ashtiani* ("Dweller in Paradise") in the second line of the inscription suggests that Humayun had died when those particular words were written. Dust Muhammad was part of the imperial Mughal atelier and is thought to have died in India around 1560, supplying an approximate *terminus ante quem* for the portrait.

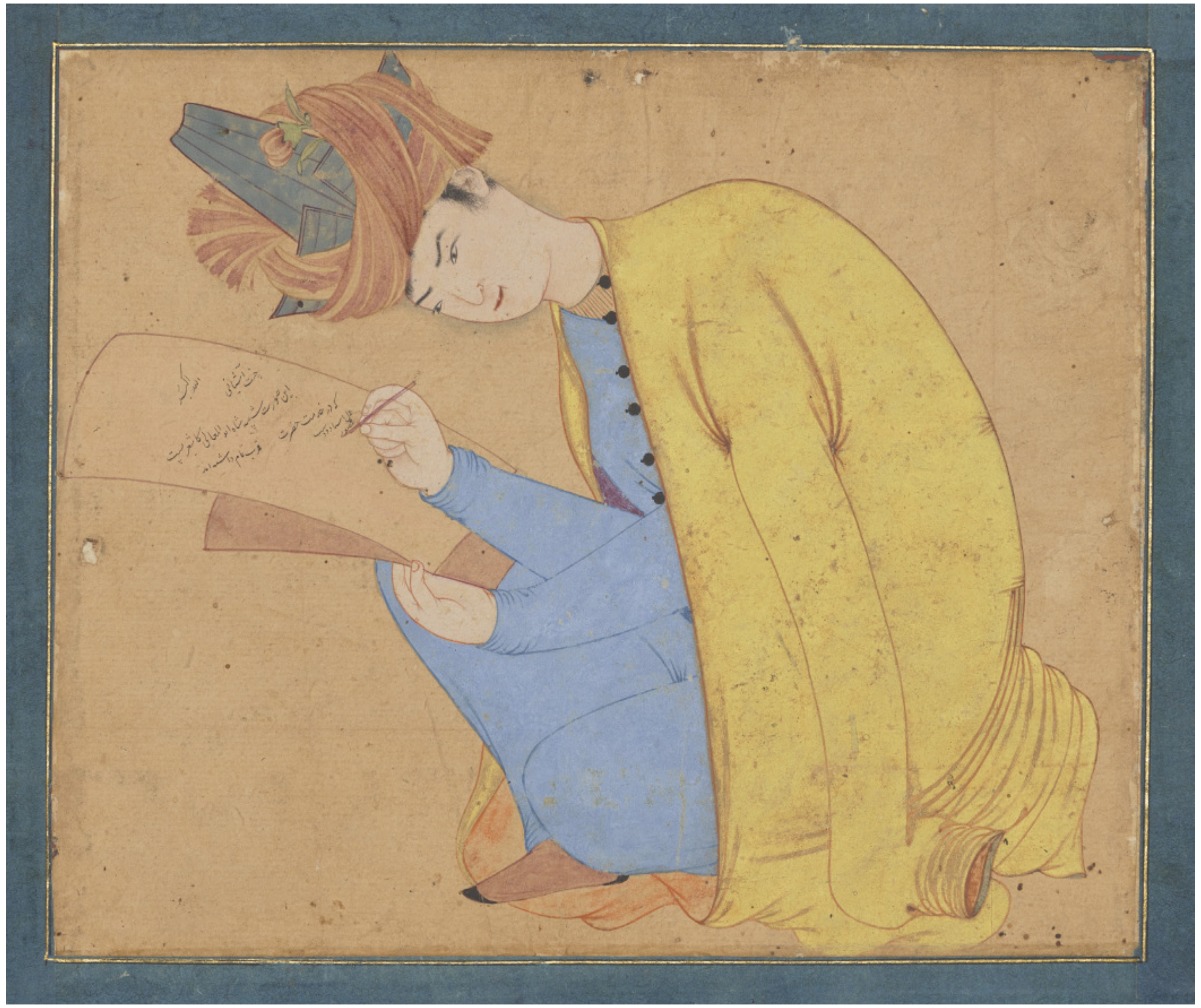
Robert Skelton proposed that the painting and the majority of the inscription were completed when Humayun was alive (i.e. before late January 1556), and that the two words *Jannat Ashtiany* had been included as soon as Humayun had died (in respect for the deceased emperor, Skelton 1994, p.42). A variation of this approach had previously been mentioned by Goswamy and Fischer, who dated the portrait to circa 1550 (Goswamy and Fischer 1987, p.34). Michael Brand and Glen Lowry dated the portrait to 1556 (Brand and Lowry 1985, pp.125, 157) and Anthony Welch and Stuart Cary Welch took *Jannat Ashtiany* to indicate that it had been painted soon after Humayun's death and dated it to 1556-1560 (Welch and Welch 1982, pp.146-8; Welch in Falk 1985, p.144). Chahryar Adle, in a long and detailed article on the painter Dust Muhammad, also dated it to 1556 (Adle 1993), and Canby, following these earlier publications, dated it to c.1556 (Canby 1998, pp.107-08).

More recently, Laura Parodi assessed the painting and inscription in conjunction with other early Mughal portraits and with an analysis of Abu'l-Ma'ali's biography (Parodi 2018A; Parodi 2018B) and concluded that it may have been made as a petitioner portrait representing a "polite request from a subordinate to a superior, through a more or less explicit text and a body language that expresses submission and trepidation", and that it related to one or other episode in Abu'l-Ma'ali's life between 1556 and 1564, possibly his appeal to Mah Cuchak Begam for her daughter's hand in marriage. Parodi suggested Dust Muhammad may have lived until 1564.

Notwithstanding these various nuanced opinions, as Milo Beach has stated, whether the portrait was made before or immediately following Humayun's death, the style is certainly that practiced at Humayun's court. (Beach 1987, p.23).

SHAH ABU'L-MA'ALI

Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali (d.1564), who came from a noble family from Kashgar in Central Asia, had joined Humayun's retinue in Kabul in 1551 and had quickly risen to an influential position and become a favourite of the emperor, accompanying him on his reconquest of India in 1554-5. However, he had a strong streak of arrogance and impetuosity. When Humayun died in 1556 in a fall down the steps of his library in Delhi, having only recently regained the empire he had lost in 1540, he was succeeded by his son Akbar, who was only thirteen at the time. According to the *Akbarnama*, soon after Akbar's accession, Abu'l-Ma'ali began to display arrogant and disrespectful behaviour towards the new emperor and was seized and imprisoned, but escaped, probably aided by supporters. Over the next eight years he was an intermittent thorn in Akbar's side. At one stage he was sent on pilgrimage to Mecca to prevent sedition at home, but generally continued his rebellious episodes, being imprisoned and escaping on more than one occasion. He was a *sayyid,* was of noble birth and possibly had a distant kinship to Babur or Timurid ancestors of the Mughals, and this meant he was able to gather support from the old Timurid nobility and others. In 1564 he petitioned Humayun's widow Mah Cuchak Begam to shelter and support him and give him her daughter Fakhrunissa Begam in marriage. Mah Cuchak Begam was a powerful figure and her ten year old son Muhmmad Hakim was Akbar's half-brother. A potential alliance would therefore have provided Abu'l-Ma'ali with protection and a significant power-base. However, following his marriage to Fakhrunissa, he murdered Mah Cuchak, seized the young Muhammad Hakim and usurped his power. Soon after this outrage, Abu'l-Ma'ali was finally captured and hanged. (*Akbarnama*, vol.2, pp.27-30, 152-6, 308-311, 314, 316-322; Bayat *Humayun*, vol. 2; Parodi 2018A).



DUST MUHAMMAD THE PAINTER

Dust Muhammad the painter (Dust Muhammad Musavvir, also known as Dust-i Divana) was one of the foremost artists of the Perso-Mughal world in the 16th century and one of the key figures in the critical period when artists from the mature Safavid school of painting were influencing the development of the nascent Mughal school. Laura Parodi has remarked that "His foundational role in the establishment of the Mughal *kitabkhana* cannot be overestimated" (Parodi 2018B, p.53). For some years it was thought that he was the same person as a calligrapher of the same name, but research, initially by Abolala Soudavar and later more comprehensively by Chahryar Adle and based on contemporary chronicles as well as the works of art themselves, confirmed that they were not the same person (see Soudavar 1992, pp.258-9, fn.74; Adle 1993). The brief biography below is based on Adle 1993, pp.238-296, and additionally for the Mughal period, Parodi and Wannell 2011, Parodi 2018A and 2018B.

Dust Muhammad the painter began his career as a star pupil of the great late Timurid master Behzad, possibly his best student, and according the contemporary chronicler Budaq Munshi he was "The first in rank … to whom no one throughout the ages can be compared. He had reached the apogee of intelligence and fineness of perception. In the art of images, his pen followed that of Master Behzad. It is possible to say that in clarity, he surpassed the Master." (Budaq, quoted in Adle 1993, p.239). Qadi Ahmad, writing a few decades later, described Dust Muhammad as "one of the incomparable pupils of Maulana Behzad, was perfect in skill and ability. He spent some time in the service of the monarch equal in dignity to Jamshid (Tahmasp), after which he went to India and made much progress there" (Qadi Ahmad, p.180). While in Persia he followed Behzad into royal service and was among the artists of Shah Tahmasp's atelier in Tabriz, contributing to the monumental manuscript of the *Shahnama* made for Shah Tahmasp in the 1520s-30s. In the late 1530s Dust Muhammad left Persia for India, joining Prince Kamran Mirza's court in Lahore and Kabul. When Humayun re-took Kabul in 1545 following his exile in Persia, Dust Muhammad joined his entourage and in the following years became the leading royal artist in Mughal Kabul. One of his most complex works dates from this period (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, ms. Libr. Pict. A 117, fol.15r, see Welch, fig. 85; Adle, 1993, pp. 251-52), a scene of Humayun with family members and attendants in the mountains near Kabul that has been interpreted in different ways, most recently by Parodi and Wannell (2011). Dust Muhammad remained in Humayun's service when he entered India in 1554-5 and successfully reclaimed his dominions there.

Little is known of Dust Muhammad after Humayun's death in 1556 and during the first years of Akbar's reign, but he was by then an old man in his seventies, and with his younger Safavid colleagues Mir Sayyid Ali and Abd al-Samad having established themselves as leaders of the Mughal royal atelier, it seems likely that he was less active. Adle suggests he died in India around 1560, while Parodi suggests 1564.

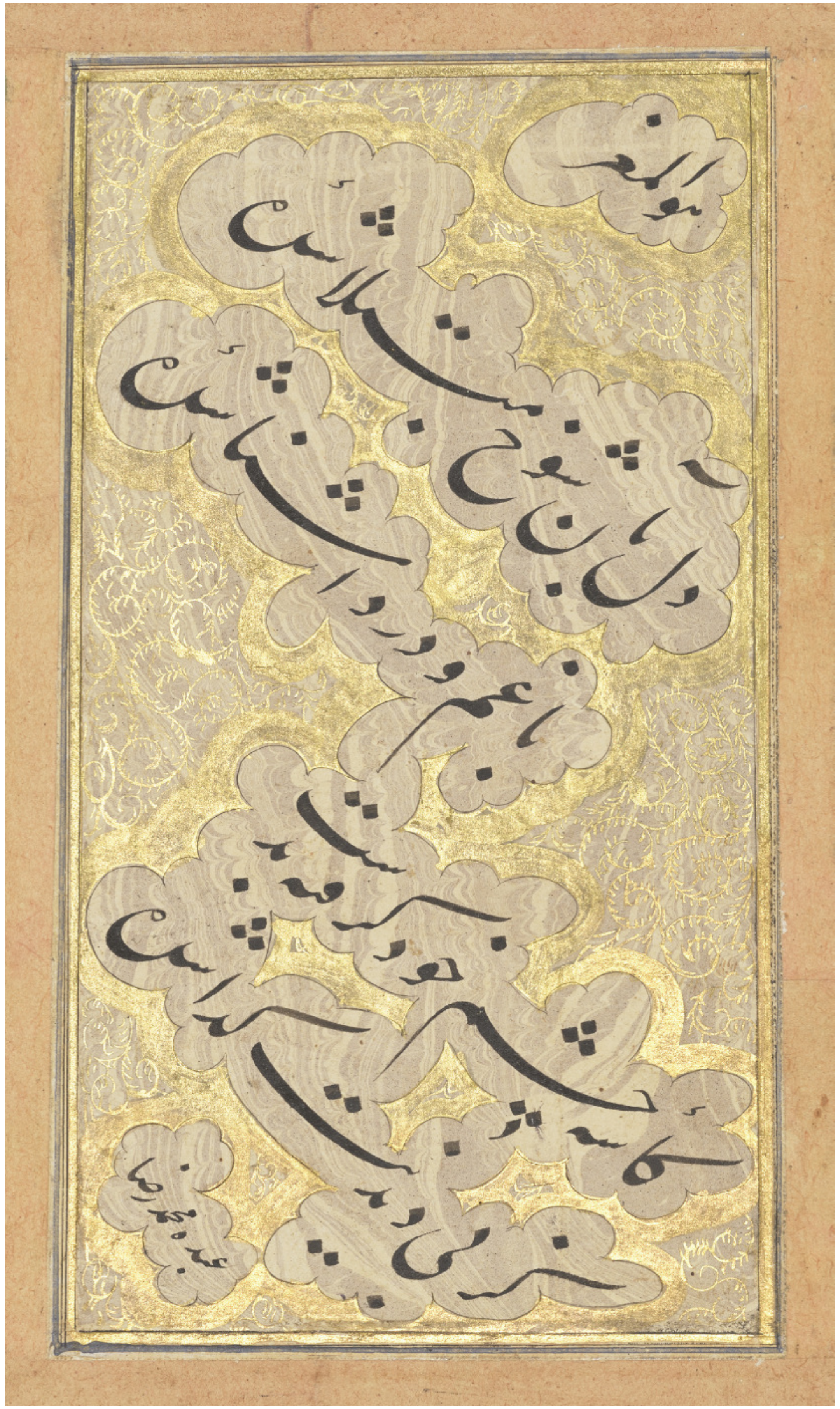
He was a highly important figure in Safavid art and in the development of Mughal painting, and as well as the ostensible role he played, as described above, his influence was felt in more subtle ways in later generations. While in Iran he had been the teacher of the painter Shaykh Muhammad (see lot 75 in this sale), and Shaykh Muhammad was in turn the master of Muhammadi and Farrukh Beg. All three were important artists and Farrukh Beg also moved to India where, decades after Dust Muhammad, he became one of the most significant and original painters at the Mughal and Deccani courts.

THE INSCRIPTION ON THE REVERSE

The verso bears a page of elegant *nasta'liq* calligraphy on superbly marbled paper (see above for translation), signed by Muhammad Reza, a Persian calligrapher of the late 16th century. He was a pupil of Muhammad Husayn Tabrizi and spent most of his career in Tabriz, with a sojourn in Istanbul in 1585-6. He died in Tabriz in 1627-8. Bayani records works by him dated between 1570 and 1586 (Bayani 1348 sh., pp.726-8). Calligraphic works by Persian masters were very popular in Mughal India in the 16th to 18th centuries and were frequently mounted in albums. In the case of the present folio, the meaning of the verses would be have been appropriate for the subject of the painting overleaf and were no doubt selected for that reason when the album folio was assembled some time later.

PROVENANCE

This folio was previously part of an important group of paintings collected in India in the late 18th century by the brothers William Dent (1761-1833) and John Dent (see also lots 25 and 82 in this sale). William Dent was in India from 1776 to 1796, mostly as an agent at Patna, Buxar and Tamluk, and John Dent was an officer in the Bengal Infantry from 1782 to 1792. For information on collecting practices among Europeans in India at the time, see lots 51-53 in this sale. The Dent collection, consisting of over 150 works and containing many important Indian and Persian miniatures, was sold at Sotheby's, London, 11 April 1972. An oil painting of the Dent brothers in Bengal from 1790 by the English artist William Devis is published in Archer 1979, p.253, fig.177, col. pl.XI.



Reverse

***24**

A FLORAL FANTASY

PROBABLY GOLCONDA, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1650

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down on card, in pink and blue borders with gold and polychrome rules, reverse plain, mounted
Painting 8⅛ x 5¼in. (20.5 x 13.2cm.); folio 9¼ x 6⅜in. (23.5 x 16.1cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd, London, 1979

EXHIBITED:

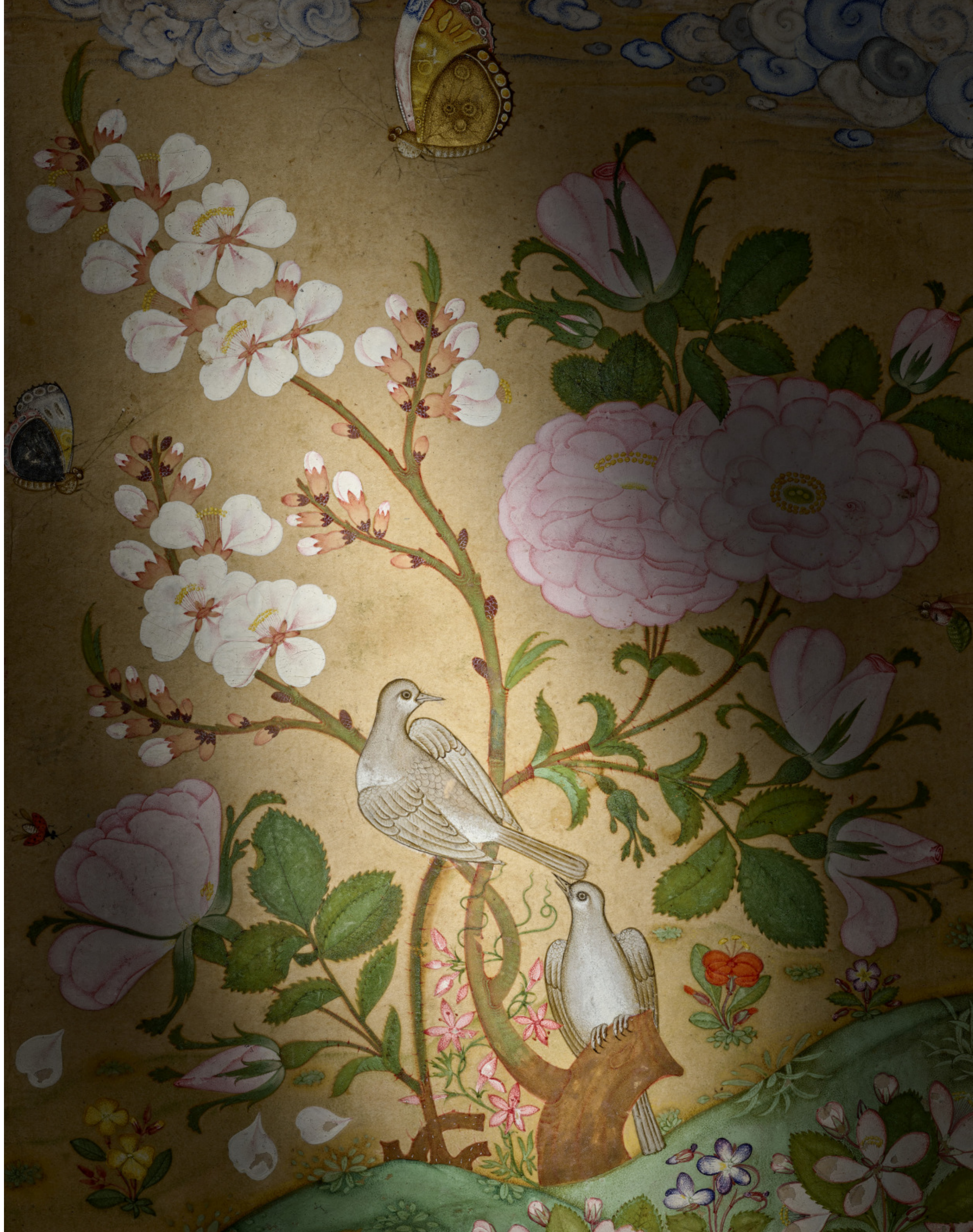
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Treasures of Islam, Musée Rath, Geneva, 1985
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

T. Falk and S. Digby, *Paintings from Mughal India,* London, 1979, no. 36, pp. 76-7
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.75, pp.225-7
A. Kevorkian, "Les Très Riches Heures de L'Aga Khan", *Connaissance des Arts*, No. 372, February 1983, fig.10, p.68
S. Safrani, "The Arts of the Islamic Book: The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan", *Arts of Asia,* vol.14, No.6, 1984, p.66
T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam*, Geneva and London, 1985, no.151, p.171
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.33, p.80
A. Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts,* New York, 1992, p.367, fig.50
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.116, pp.157-8
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients*, Zurich, 1998, no.22, pp.74-5
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.116, pp.157-8
N. Haidar, "Giant Butterfly, Tiny Tree: Leaps of Scale in Deccani Painting" in M.E. Aitken (ed.). *A Magic World, New Visions of Indian Painting*, Marg Publications, vol.68, No.2, December 2016, pp.22, 25, fig.6

> “A deliciously ornamental floral fantasy, painted in the Deccan, at Golconda, during the late 17th century, is paradoxically empowered by fragile delicacy: it makes us wish to reach out for it and inhale deeply”

STUART CARY WELCH



This scene is an exotic and deeply alluring celebration of spring. Its superb blend of fantasy, naturalism and lyricism give it an enchanted, other-worldly character.

Composed with a careful attention to natural detail, the focal point is a blossoming prunus and a rose bush coming into flower, their stems crossing carefully behind the nightingale The buds of the prunus are marked with a delicate purple fish-scale, and the rose stem is dotted with fine thorns. Rosebuds, not yet fully open, curl inward with a sculptural elegance, reminiscent of the spiral heart of a seashell. Surrounding these central plants, a variety of other flowers add depth and liveliness to the composition. A purple iris stands out prominently, while a low-growing shrub blooms in the foreground beside a stream, its form echoing the gentle incline of the nearby hillside. Between two birds, the curling tendrils of a vine bearing pink flowers climbs up the prunus branch, adding a sense of vertical movement. The space around the flowers is animated with nightingales with finely rendered plumage and insects and butterflies with thread-like legs and antennae. Behind the verdant bank, a second, more arid meadow appears, where smaller flowers grow and petals are seen falling from the rose bush. Canby writes that the suggestion of spring is reinforced here – "even the desert is in bloom" (Canby 1998, p.157).

In the 16th and 17th centuries, European prints and herbals often provided the inspiration for floral studies of this type, which were popular in both Iran and India. The artist responsible for this joyous work was no doubt familiar with these European prints. He clearly borrowed lightly from them, for instance in the insects and the depiction of the multiple stages of the rose blooming, or in the soft stippled effect that adds texture to the grassy ground and the way that the undersides of the leaves are done in a lighter colour. But he uses these elements in a landscape that is entirely his own – "less decorative than the Safavid, less naturalistic than the Mughal, less factual and less moralizing than the Dutch" (Welch 1982, p.227).

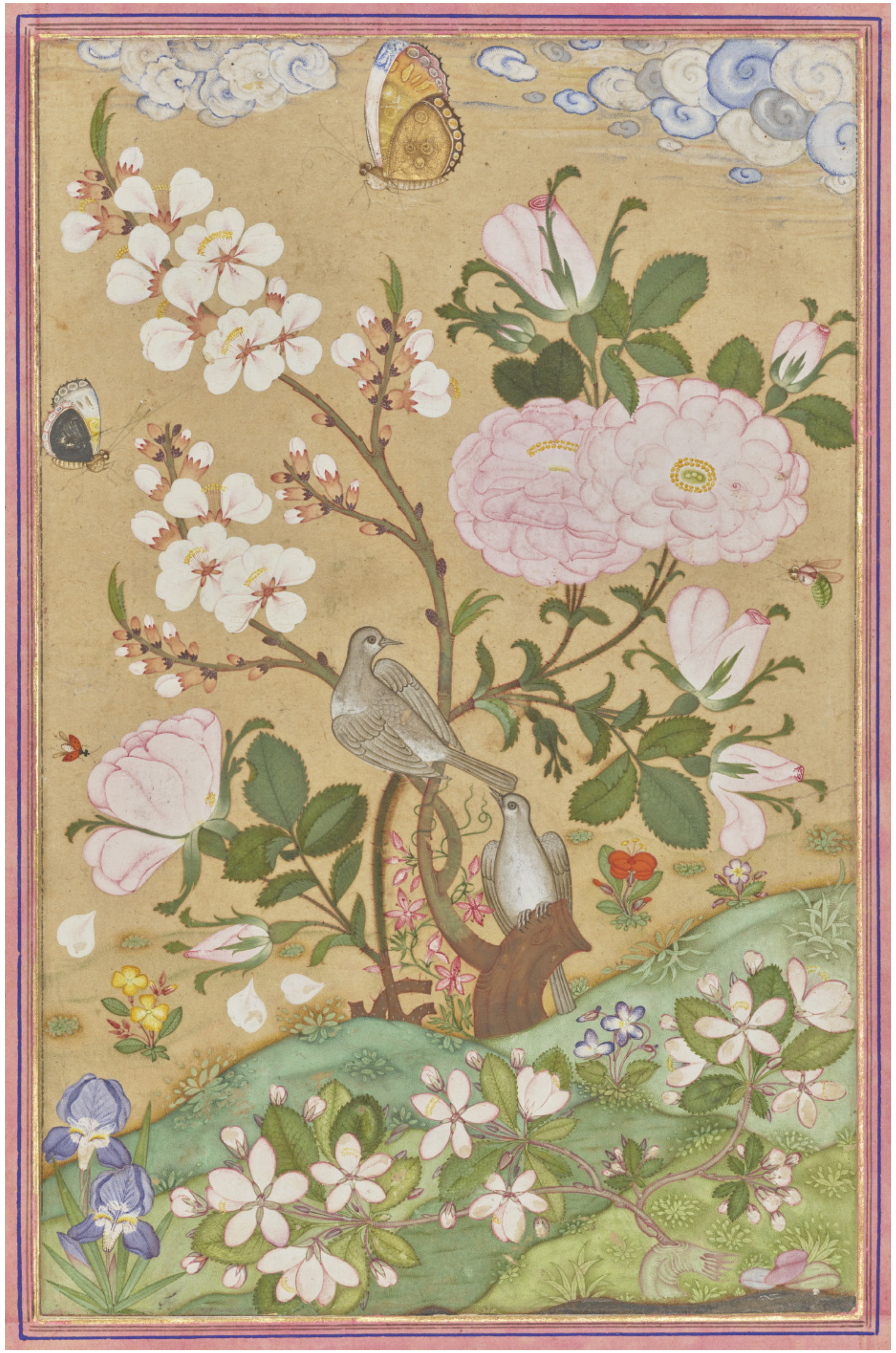
The work also has similarity with that of Safavid painters, such as Shafi' Abbasi (ca.1628-1674), for whom the theme of the *gul-o-bulbul*, or rose and nightingale, was a popular one. Full of symbolism, in Persian poetry, the plain-looking nightingale is a metaphor for the unrequited lover. He never ceases singing his love for the rose, a metaphor for youthfulness and beauty who responds with silence. In the 17th century, Golconda sustained strong cultural ties with Safavid Iran and there was a appetite there for undiluted Persian taste. However there was also a constant movement of artists in both directions between the two countries in this period which meant that an innovation or style prevalent in one country would quickly transmit to the other.

When first published by Toby Falk, our painting was attributed to a Persian artist working in Golconda. Welch and Welch also attributed the painting to Golconda but in his catalogue *Art of the Persian Courts*, Abolala Soudavar linked the painting to the enigmatic 17th century Safavid artist Bahram Sofrekesh – largely on the basis of a similar prunus blossom in a painting by the artist in the Art and History Trust Collection (Soudavar 1992, p.366). Whilst there is a visual connection, and indeed Sofrekesh's works betray an Indian taste, as Sheila Canby has since argued, the painting has "an amplitude and warmth that do not appear in the work of the Safavid artist. Such qualities do characterise…mid-17th century Golconda paintings, through the light bright green of the ground and the precise draughtsmanship of the flowers, birds and insects" (Canby 1998, p.158).

In many ways our painting is astonishingly naturalistic, but the scene also verges on the hyperreal, as so much Deccani work of the 17th century does. Part of this sense of hyperreality is achieved by a complete disregard for the convention of scale – with butterflies the size of nightingales and roses that tower over them. Whilst the artist has meticulously observed so much of nature's beauty, he creates a sense of unreality by mixing the various elements with no regard for the proportions of nature. Another of the compelling Deccani features of our painting is the verdant green ground which recalls that upon which our Prince Hawking (lot 28) is set. It also bears some similarity to the ground of a painting of an *African Courtier*, painted in Golconda in the third quarter of the 17th century (in a private collection; published in Haidar and Sardar 2015, no.129, p.237).

A painting that helps to reinforce the attribution to Golconda, is the opening folio of an album prepared there for the Dutch market, circa 1645 (the date it is recorded as entering a Deccani library), and now in the Khalili Collection (Leach 1998, no.66, pp.228-9). Cleanly drawn with decisive strokes, it depicts a cluster of violets. Both our painting and the Khalili example incorporate varied influences from Europe and Iran, but is distinctive and more naturally ornamental.

Another closely comparable painting to ours was identified by Toby Falk – a smaller Deccani flower study in the Royal Library, Windsor, which he had believed to be the work of the same hand. It is simply signed 'Amin' and is dated AH 1069/1658-9 AD (Album A 13, f.50b). Whilst there is some similarity, for instance in bird and in the butterflies that circle above the bloom, it lacks the intensity, animation and complexity of our scene.



*25

TULIPS AND AN IRIS

MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1640-50

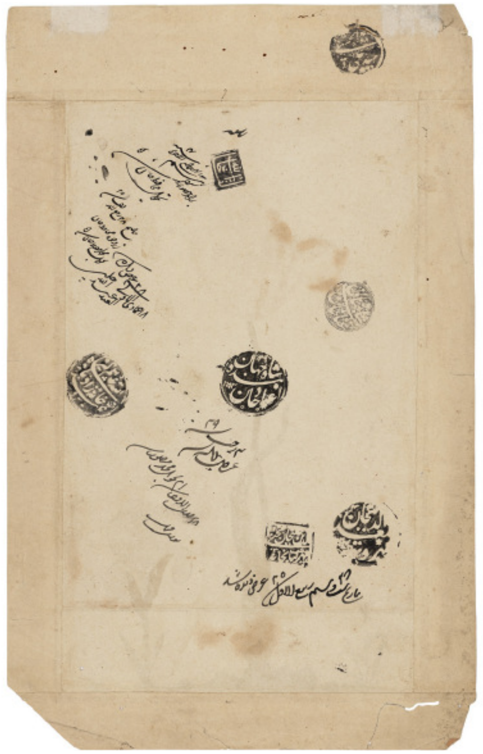
Opaque pigments on paper, laid down on pink borders, reverse plain with several imperial Mughal seal impressions from the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb dated 1652-63
Painting 10⅜ x 6⅜in. (26.4 x 16.1cm.); folio 12⅝ x 7⅞in. (32.1 x 20.1cm.)

£100,000-150,000
US$140,000-200,000
€120,000-170,000

PROVENANCE:
William Dent (1761-1833) or his brother John Dent, Bengal, India and England
By descent to Sir Annesley Wilkinson Robert Dent C.B. (1895-1983)
Sotheby's London, *An Interesting Collection of Oriental Miniatures, The Property of Sir A.W. Robert Dent,* 11 April 1972, lot 41

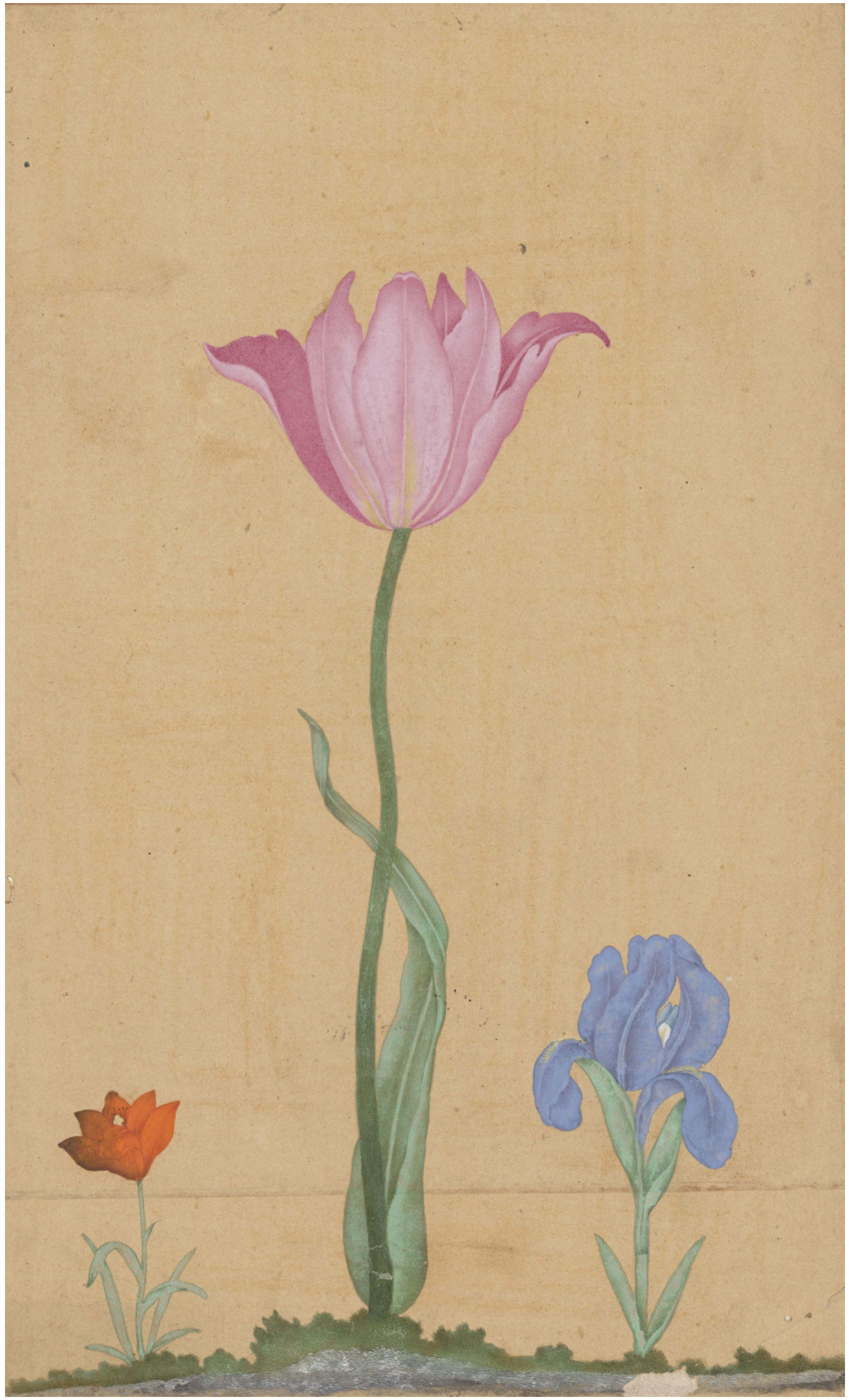
EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Masters of the Brush: Paintings and Manuscripts from the Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1984
India, Art and Culture 1300-1900, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1985
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
The Romance of the Taj Mahal, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Toledo Museum of Art; Virginia Museum of Arts, Richmond, VA; Asia Society, New York, 1989
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Chefs-d'oeuvre islamiques de l'Aga Khan Museum, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2007
Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum - Arts of the Book & Calligraphy, Sakip Sabanci Museum, Istanbul, 2010-11

LITERATURE:
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.72, pp.217-20
S.C. Welch, *India, Art and Culture 1300-1900*, New York, 1985, no.161, pp.245-7, and publicity poster
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.29, pp.74-5
P. Pal et al., *The Romance of the Taj Mahal*, Los Angeles and London, 1989, no.99, p.103
Darshan, In the Company of Saints, The Unstruck Sound, No.73, April 1993, p.47
R. Nath, *History of Mughal Architecture,* vol. III, New Delhi, 1994, fig.5, p.145 and back cover
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.107, pp.144-5
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients,* Zurich, 1998, no.21, pp.68-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.107, pp.144-5
Z. Ziad (ed.), *The Magnificent Mughals*, Oxford and Karachi, 2002, fig.35, p.175
C. Adle, I. Habib, K. Baipakov, *UNESCO History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Volume V, Development in contrast: from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century*, Paris, 2003, pp.599-600, fig.15
S. Makariou (ed.), *Chefs-d'oeuvre islamiques de l'Aga Khan Museum*, Paris, 2007, cat.9, pp.40-1
Graves, Margaret S. et al. *Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum - Arts of the Book & Calligraphy.* Istanbul, 2011. no.157, p.345
B. Goswamy, *The Spirit of Indian Painting*, London, 2016, pp.334-7
L. Anvar, *Leyli et Majnûn de Jâmi, illustré par les miniatures d'Orient*, Paris, 2021, p.120



Reverse

> "The master painter whose work this is – Cary and Antony Welch have attributed it to the Shahjahani painter whom they designate only as the 'Master of the Borders' – wants us to see how finely he has observed these flowers: the erect stalk of the tulip in the centre undulating lightly; its single leaf of rich and subtly variegated green curving about the stalk and inclining its tip 'as if in a slow and measured dance around the centre"'
>
> **B.N. GOSWAMY**



This hauntingly beautiful portrait of Tulips and an iris is one of the greatest floral studies in all Indian painting. So captivating was this image considered to be, that it was used as the poster for the 1985 exhibition "India" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Cary Welch commented that "it far transcends botany… The artist has so elevated and humanised these flowers that we approach them as we should Shah Jahan himself…" (Welch 1985, p.245), and B. N. Goswamy observed that "The artists working for Jahangir and Shahjahan, possessed of the same keen eye [as the emperors], sometimes imparted to the flowers that they painted an unearthly air of lyricism, combining the natural and the ideal." Goswamy 2016, p.336).

Anthony Welch's eloquent description of the painting is memorable: "This is a picture startling in its simplicity and stirring in its richness. The yellow-tan paper supplies no sky, provides no background, and supports only a meagre, slightly rising line of moss at the bottom of the page Towering over this minute landscape is a colossus, a common tulip far too vital and too large for the ground in which it seems to grow. Its erect stalk undulates slightly, and its single leaf of rich and subtly variegated green curves about the stalk and inclines its tip as if in a slow and measured dance around a center. The blossom is in full and perfect bloom: the shades of pink and streaks of yellow rich and luminous, the petals crisply curving and just open enough to reveal the depth of pink along their inner surfaces. The iris, to the right and farther back, is less splendidly dramatic and varicolored, but it is painted with marvelous subtlety, the cupped petals slightly parted to reveal pollen like the softest powder. To the left and seemingly far in the distance, a Western Asiatic tulip (indigenous to Kashmir but not to the rest of India) appears more modest still, with gently drooping leaves and bent head. This personified analysis is appropriate, for these are highly individual portraits. Other Mughal painters have been keenly observant, but the unnamed master here was more ambitious, bent on capturing the essence of each flower - its tulipness, its irisness. Thus, despite the technical illogic of their setting, they 'live' and dominate their environment, which is far vaster than it seems initially, for through a combination of decreasing size and increasing simplicity the iris and the second tulip recede to a great depth. In its very simplicity this recession is a remarkable artistic achievement, transcending the linear and atmospheric perspectives adopted from European art by Mughal painters more than fifty years before…". (A. Welch in Welch and Welch 1982, pp.217-19).

Stuart Cary Welch had linked the authorship of this work to an anonymous artist he dubbed the "master of the borders" suggesting stylistic similarities with the flowers in the borders of the various albums made for Shah Jahan (Welch 1985, p.245-7). While there are obvious similarities and a shared generality of source imagery, the quality and artistic intensity of the present work far surpasses the floral elements in the borders of albums. Here the painter has achieved artistic alchemy, breathing life into the tulip, giving it an aesthetic soul and taking it beyond naturalism to the realm of Platonic forms. Commenting on this work, Josephy M. Dye III stated: "the highly poised painting is the work of an artist who is not satisfied with the physical reality of God's handiwork; rather, he seeks through carefully calculated exaggerations to transport the subject to a different realm. These unblemished, gem-coloured flowers grow in Paradise, not on earth." (Dye in Pal 1989, p.104)

Goswamy noted that tulips feature frequently in Persian and Urdu poetry, with special poetic names given to different varieties, "the Tulip of Desert, the Tulip with burnt Heart, the Tulip with a Head Bent in Sorrows. … These are descriptions that serve the poet's purpose well, for he likens the tulip to the beauty of the face of the beloved. *Lala-rukh* – 'with a face like a tulip' – is how the beauteous one is often described." (Goswamy and Fischer 1987, p.74).

The Mughal emperors had long been enchanted by flowers, especially tulips. The first Mughal emperor Babur wrote about them in his memoirs: "Tulips of many colours cover these foot-hills; I once counted them up; it came out at 32 or 33 different sorts. We named one the Rose-scented, because its perfume was a little like that of the red rose; it grows by itself on Shaikh's-plain, here and nowhere else. The Hundred-leaved tulip is another…" (*Baburnama*, p.215). By the early 17th century this interest had grown and Jahangir wrote movingly of the flower-filled valleys he saw in Kashmir:

"In the soul-enchanting spring the hills and plains are filled with blossoms; the gates, the walls, the courts, the roofs, are lighted up by the torches of banquet-adorning tulips. What shall we say of these things or of the wide meadows and the fragrant trefoil?
The flower-nymphs were brilliant
Their cheeks shone like lamps
There were fragrant buds on their stems
Like dark amulets on the arms of the beloved"
(*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri,* pp.134-5, 144, transl. A, Rogers)

Jahangir ordered his artist Mansur to paint some of the blooms: "The flowers that are seen in the territories of Kashmir are beyond all calculation. Those that Nadiru-l-'asri Ustad Mansur has painted are more than 100." (*ibid.* p.145)

Some years later, when describing the city of Srinagar in Kashmir, Shah Jahan wrote: "They construct their houses three or four stories high, one above the other, and surmount them with trussed roofs covered with wooden shingles; and over this they spread grass and then lay a coating of earth over all. In this they plant bulbs of the *lala chughasu*, one of the finest species of tulip, which thrives abundantly in Kashmir and bears a gorgeous flower." (*Shah Jahan Nama*, p.125).

This strong interest in flowers and floral imagery coincided with the arrival in India of European engravings, printed herbals and *florilegia,* which the painters of the royal Mughal atelier readily absorbed into their artistic vocabulary, producing their own brilliant versions. The European source image for the present work has not so far been firmly identified, but a very similar tulip is found in the *Theatrum Florae* of Daniel Rabel (1578-1637), first published in Paris in 1622 and again 1627 and 1633. Very similar tulips to the central flower here are pictured on plates 4, 6 and 9 of *Theatrum Florae*, and one of the tulips on plate 4 also has a very similar leaf curling round the stem. Plate 11 in the same work has two tulips that closely resemble the smaller tulip at lower left in the present work, and plate 46 has similar irises to the iris on the right in the present work. Canby pointed out that the unknown source engraving for the central tulip here must also have been exported to Turkey, as a contemporary Ottoman drawing is in the British Museum (1995,0228,0.1). Its presence in both India and Turkey neatly maps the expanding trade networks of the Europeans in the 17th century. For studies on the source imagery of such flower paintings, see Skelton 1972. For other Mughal flower studies of the Jahangir and Shah Jahan periods see Das 2012, pp.138-49; Verma 1999; Falk and Archer 1981, nos.68, ff.23, 24, 41, 42, 49-54, 61-68, pp.391-9).

THE ROYAL LIBRARY NOTES

The seal impressions and inscriptions of royal librarians on the verso indicate that the painting entered the imperial Mughal library towards the end of Shah Jahan's reign (1628-1658) and remained there well into Aurangzeb's reign (1658-1707). The dates mentioned and the royal librarians named in the inscriptions are as follows (in chronological order):

28 Rabi I of regnal year 25 of Shah Jahan's reign (9 March 1652), transferred from Mahafiz Khan to Muhammad Ahfaz Khan, librarians of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb
18 Jumada I of regnal year 28 of Shah Jahan's reign (26 March 1655): inspected by Abdallah Chalabi, a librarian of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb
4 Rajab of regnal year 29, probably of Shah Jahan's reign (10 May 1655): inspected (no name)
13 Jumada II of regnal year 4, probably of Aurangzeb's reign (19 April 1662): transferred on the orders of "His Radiant Highness" to Mahafiz Khan, a librarian of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb
28 Jumada I of regnal year 21 of Aurangzeb's reign (18 July 1678): transferred to the care of Muhammad Mansur, a librarian of Aurangzeb

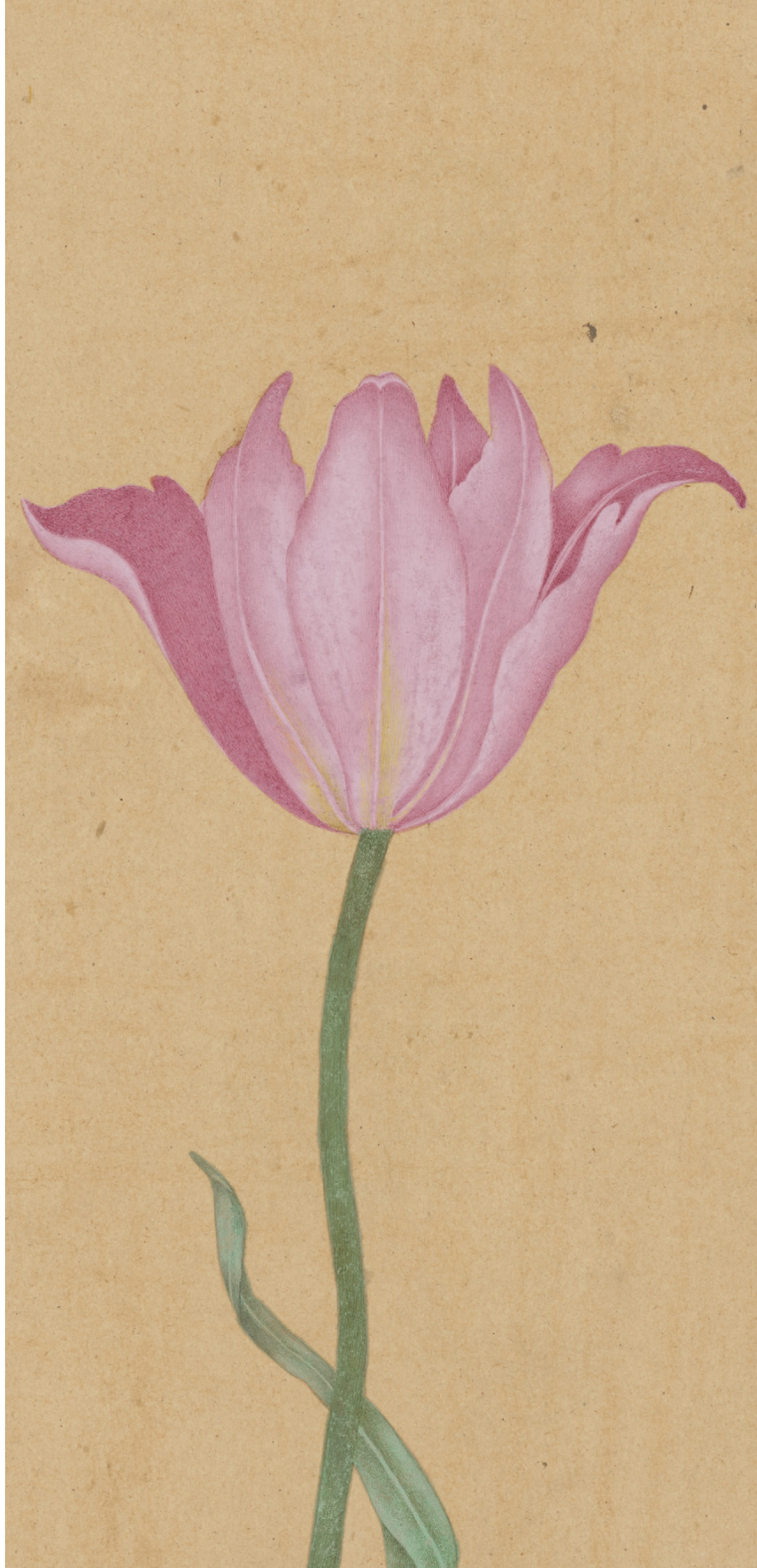
The librarians' seal impressions are as follows:

I'timad Khan, "servant of Shah Jahan", dated AH 1063/1652-3 AD
Inayat Khan, "servant of Shah Jahan", dated AH 1968/1657-8 AD
Abdallah, house-born of Alamgir, undated
Sayyid Ali Husayn, a librarian of Aurangzeb, undated
Kifayatullah Khan, undated

In addition, there are two seals probably of private owners rather than royal librarians, one of which has a faint date of AH 1153/1740-41 AD, indicating that the painting had left the royal library by that date. Interestingly this coincides very closely with the dispersal of the Mughal royal library after the sack of Delhi by the Persian warlord Nadir Shah in 1739. For a detailed study of Mughal librarians and inspection notes Seyller 1997.

PROVENANCE

The present page was previously part of important group of paintings collected in the late 18th century by the brothers William Dent (1761-1833) and John Dent, which remained in the Dent family for two centuries until sold at auction in 1972. For further information on the Dent collection see lot 23 in this sale.



> “Prince Sadruddin is devoted to animals, and perhaps princely felinophilia prompted the purchase of one of Mughal art’s liveliest animal pictures, A Family of Cheetahs. Unusually large and impressive, it can be attributed to Basawan, Emperor Akbar’s most innovative and expressive artists”
>
> **STUART CARY WELCH**

***26**

A FAMILY OF CHEETAHS IN A ROCKY LANDSCAPE

ATTRIBUTED TO BASAWAN, MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1575-80

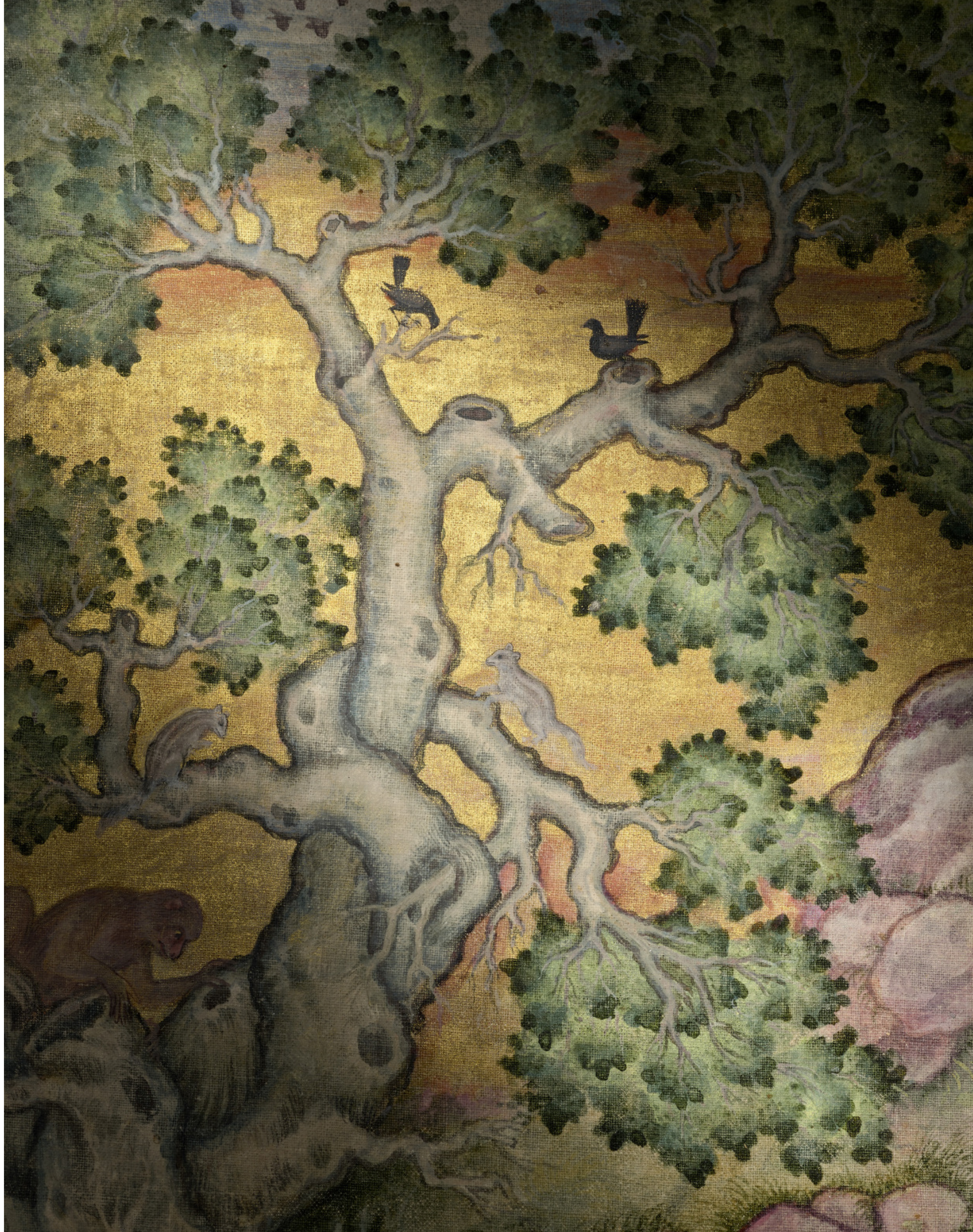
Opaque pigments heightened with gold on cloth, laid down on gold-flecked blue borders, the salmon pink margins similarly flecked with gold, reverse plain, mounted
Painting 11¾ x 7⅜in. (29.8 x 18.6cm.); folio 15¾ x 10¾in. (40.1 x 27.2cm.)

£700,000-1,000,000
US$960,000-1,400,000
€810,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:
P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd., London, 1978

EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Masters of the Brush: Paintings and Manuscripts from the Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1984 (image used for publicity poster)
Akbar's India, Asia Society, New York; Harvard University Art Museums; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1985-6
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
T. Falk, "Mughal and Rajput Painting", *Indian Painting, Mughal and Rajput, and a Sultanate Manuscript*, Colnaghi, London, 1978, no.3, p.18 and colour frontispiece
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.50, pp.149-151
A. Kevorkian, "Les Très Riches Heures de L'Aga Khan", *Connaissance des Arts*, no.372, February 1983, fig.9, p.67
S. Safrani, "The Arts of the Islamic Book: The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan", *Arts of Asia*, vol.14, no.6, 1984, p.61
M. Brand and G. Lowry, *Akbar's India, Art from the Mughal City of Victory*, New York, 1985, no.46, pp.79, 81, 148
M.C. Beach, *Early Mughal Painting*, Cambridge, MA.,1987, fig.14, pp.27-9
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.62, pp.134-5
A. Okada, *Indian Miniatures of the Mughal Court*, Paris and New York, 1992, p.80, fig.77
S. Verma, *Mughal Painters and their Works,* Delhi, 1994, p.132
Divyabhanusinh, *The End of a Trail*, New Delhi, 1995, p.51.S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.78, p.108
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets et Paladins*, London, 1998, no.78, p.108-9
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients,* Zurich, 1998, no.15, pp.56-7
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.78, p.108-9
A. Okada, "Basawan", in P. Pal (ed.), *Master Artists of the Imperial Mughal Court*, Marg, Mumbai, 1991, pp.4-5, fig.2
A.K. Das, *Wonders of Nature*, Marg, Mumbai, December 2012, pp.14, 18, fig.1.6
Z. Khanam, *Birds and Animals in Mughal Miniature Painting*, New Delhi, 2009, p.33
J. Seyller, "Basawan" in M.C. Beach, E. Fischer and B.N. Goswamy (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, I /11, Zurich, 2011, p.121, no. 18
A. Qureshi de Unger, *The Hunt as Metaphor in Mughal Painting*, Artibus Asiae Supplementum, Zurich, 2022, fig.10ii
Divyabhanusinh, *The Story of India's Cheetahs,* Marg, Mumbai, 2023, p.50 and cover image



This breathtaking study of a family of cheetahs is one of the most outstanding and unforgettable early Mughal paintings. Exquisitely observed and rendered with an evocative and highly expressive naturalism, it has been firmly attributed by many leading scholars to the great Akbar-period master Basawan, one of the emperor's favourite artists.

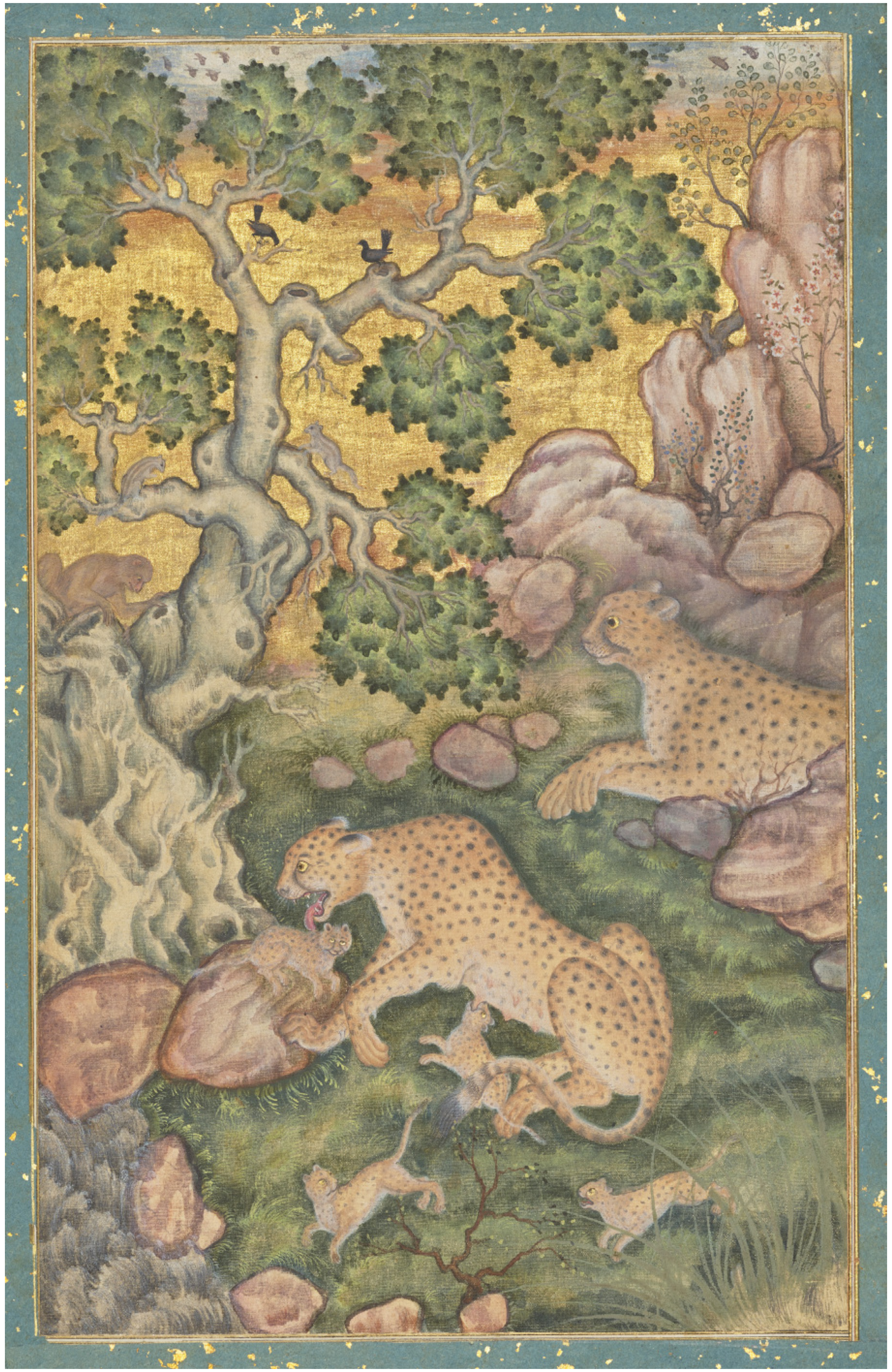
It is a highly important work in the history of early Mughal art, representing one of the earliest natural history studies. It has been exhibited and published on numerous occasions and has been esteemed by art historians for several decades; Brand and Lowry described it as superb (Brand and Lowry 1985, p.79), Goswamy and Fischer as a quite remarkable study (Goswamy and Fischer 1987, p.134), and Amina Okada commented that it "confirms the graphic mastery of the prodigious Basawan", who "displays a concern for contours and a sensitivity to supple and rounded forms which produce spectacular indeed almost baroque effects while never disturbing the general harmony of the composition" (Okada 1991, p.4).

It has also been celebrated by naturalists for its significant rarity in depicting these majestic animals in their natural habitat. Divyabanusinh described it as follows: "This charming scene of a cheetah family in its natural habitat has been delicately executed by a master. It is the earliest known study of cheetahs in the wild in India" (Divyabanusinh 1995, p.51 and 2023, p.51).

THE SUBJECT

Cheetahs have been prized by kings and princes all over Eurasia since ancient times, primarily for their hunting skills, but also as majestic royal companions. Hunting with cheetahs was one of the foremost princely pastimes in India for centuries, and the Mughal emperors were enthusiastic followers of this tradition. Akbar (r. 1556-1605) appears to have had a particular fondness for cheetahs, verging on the superstitious. The *Akbarnama* records that in 1555, at the age of 13, Akbar was presented with a cheetah which he named Fatehbaz – "the gamester of victory" (*Akbarnama,* vol. 1, pp.629-30). Abu'l Fazl, the author of the *Akbarnama* and Akbar's confidant, informs us that the emperor had particular regard for this animal, and the name that Akbar chose for the animal suggests that the emperor projected auspicious qualities on to cheetahs, an attitude that strengthened during his reign. He often saw his interactions with cheetahs, whether on the hunting field or otherwise, as being propitious and providential. He was hunting in 1569 when he was informed that a particularly powerful cheetah had been captured. Akbar proceeded to the spot, and while he was in the process of retrieving the animal he was informed of the birth of a daughter. Akbar linked to the two events as propitious: "He gave to that auspicious arrival the name Khanam, and ordered rejoicings. It is hoped that the notes of auspiciousness in her will increase day by day and that she will be a source of increased life and fortune to the lord of the world" (*Akbarnama*, vol. II, p.509). A related event occurred in the same year, when Akbar's wife Mariam al-Zamani was pregnant with the future emperor Jahangir. One day the baby made no movement in his mother's womb and all the attendants were greatly worried for the health of the unborn royal child. It was a Friday, and Akbar was hunting cheetahs at the time. When the worrying news from the harem was reported to Akbar, he stopped hunting and made a vow that if the child was saved he would never hunt cheetahs on a Friday (*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, vol. II, pp.45-6; *Jahangirnama*, p.218).

The particular regard that Akbar had for cheetahs, as described above, combined with a burgeoning interest in natural history paintings, may have influenced the creation of the present painting. There are several illustrations involving trained hunting cheetahs in the *Akbarnama* (see, e.g., Stronge 2002, pls.39, 42), however, in depicting cheetahs in their natural habitat in the wild, the present painting is a much rarer work. Beach identified this painting and a well-known scene of *Two Rosy Pastors* (Gulshan Album, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Lib. Pict. A 117, fol.17v) as being the most important early Mughal natural history studies, and, with their similar size and visual character (and both being painted on cloth, a rare feature outside the *Hamzanama* series), suggested that they may have been produced for an album of animal studies being prepared for Akbar (Beach 1987, no.13, pp.28, 30; see also Das 2012, fig.I.8).



THE PAINTING

The scene portrays a family of cheetahs relaxing on a patch of luxuriant grass in a rocky landscape. A stream tumbles to the lower left and a large tree with a twisted trunk grows animatedly at the upper left, providing the cheetahs with shade. Small bushes grow amongst the rocks at upper right, two bearing blossom. An intense gold sky backlights the whole scene, with flights of birds in the distance at the upper edge. The male cheetah looks on contentedly while the female suckles one cub while cleaning another. Two further cubs play animatedly in the foreground. A clump of long spiky grass grows at the lower right. So focussed is the viewer on the idyllic scene in the foreground that it is easy to overlook the pair of blackbirds in the upper branches of the tree as well as the pair of squirrels in the lower branches, and the solitary monkey peering curiously at the cheetahs through a cleft in the knotty tree-trunk. The inclusion of pairs of animals and birds was a visual trope in Persian and Indian painting (and other traditions) often symbolising fertility, fidelity and marital harmony, and the artist's decision here to include the blackbirds and squirrels in pairs was no doubt intentional, reinforcing the idea of a family idyll represented by the cheetahs. The gnarled and twisted tree, with a large branch coiling round the main trunk, is particularly expressive and typical of Basawan. Okada commented that "The tree, with its knotty trunk, tortuous and interlaced branches, will remain a leitmotiv in many of his compositions, a troubling reflection of the painter's love for a mysterious and brilliant dramatization of natural forms." (Okada 1991, p.4). Another of Basawan's early works, *The Cow and the Calf* (Doha, Museum of Islamic Art, MS 33.02) includes a tree with the same feature of a thick branch wrapping itself round the trunk (see Brand and Lowry 1985, p.78; Das 2012, fig.I.7).

The present painting is a powerful and exceptionally expressive work, simultaneously dramatic and tranquil, combining masterful execution with a naturalism, intensity and sensitivity that marks it out as a masterpiece of Basawan's oeuvre. Anthony Welch commented on its "soft contours, imaginative nuances of colour, and sensitivity to emotions and personalities" and suggested it would have delighted the artist's royal patron (Welch and Welch 1982, p.149).

In the *Ain-i Akbari*, Abu'l Fazl remarked that in Akbari painting, "even inanimate objects look as though they had life" (*Ain-i Akbari*, vol.1, pp.107). Cary Welch commented that Abu'l Fazl's remark applies particularly meaningfully to Basawan's work, in which "Each tree, still life object, or building plays some role in the action" (Welch 1961, pp.15-16). Both descriptions can be applied emphatically to the present work, where the sky, the rocks, the tumbling water and the tortuous, dramatically gnarled tree all play an active role. The golden sky is vividly present, a radiant glow that silhouettes and amplifies the already dramatic tree and bathes the foreground in light. It is not simply a passive backdrop, but has become an active part of the scene, adding to the sense of realism as the viewer observes the family of cheetahs relaxing in the bright light of dawn. Like the watching monkey behind the tree, the viewer feels almost personally present, observing the family of cheetahs going about their domestic activities in their natural habitat. Akbar had a particular fondness for Basawan's empathetic rendering of characters that helped to make him the paramount artist of the royal atelier (Seyller 2011A, pp.123-4).

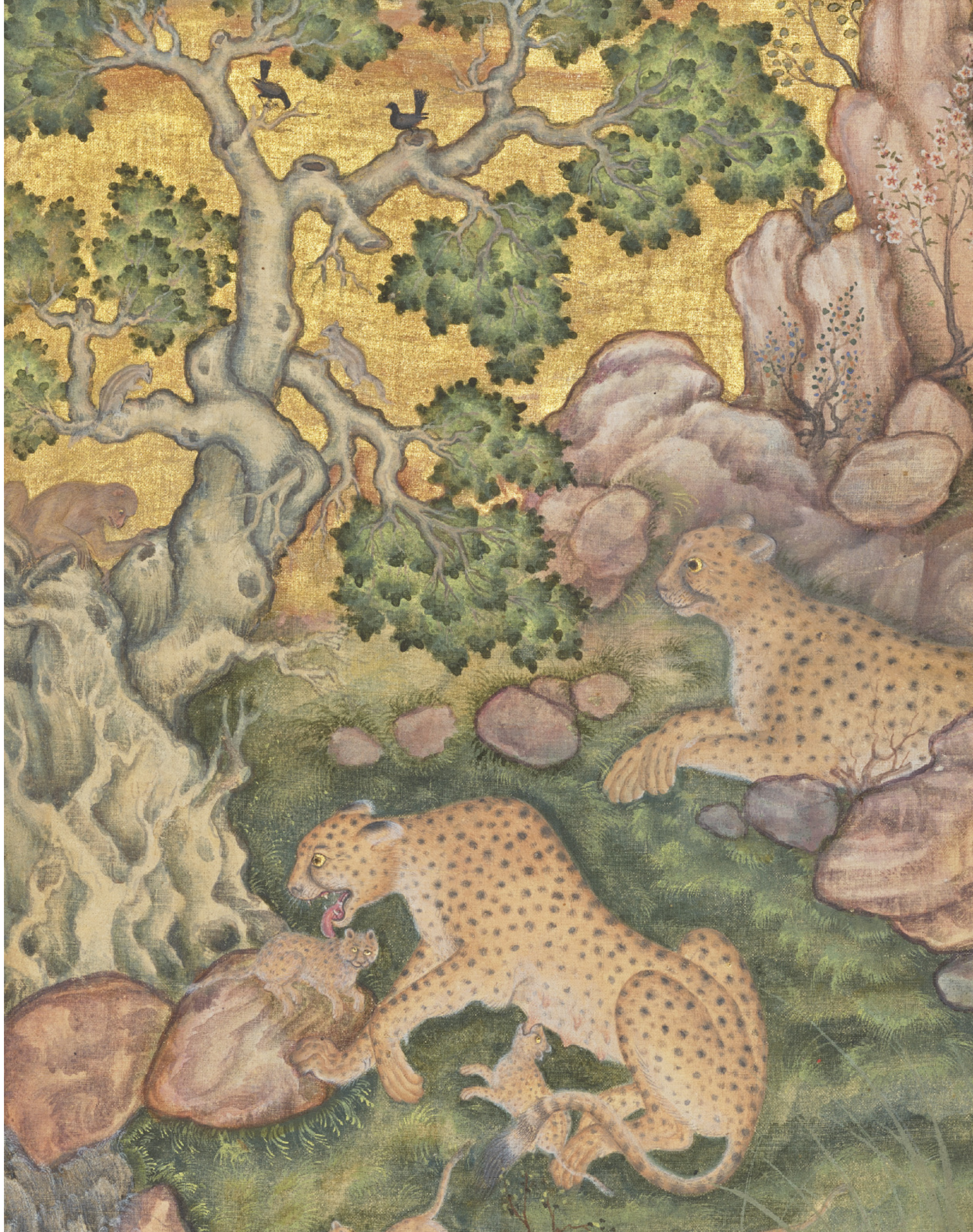
Basawan's interest in realism is expressed not only in his inventive approach to the composition and to form, volume, colour, detail and depth, and "atmospheric perspective" (Seyller 2011A, p.119), but also in the decision to portray the animals in their natural habitat rather than tamed or in the hunting field. The choice of the particular landscape setting here - a hilly outcrop with the cheetahs reclining under a tree - may reflect an interest in naturalism on the part of the artist and his royal patron. In the *Ain-i Akbari* Abu'l Fazl describes aspects of cheetahs' behaviour in the wild, informing us that their natural habitat is on top of a hill under the shade of a tree, exactly the setting we have here (*Ain-i Akbari*, vol.1, p.296). Seyller commented that Basawan incorporated many such empirical observations into his works (Seyller 2011A, p.119).

Basawan's attention to naturalistic detail is also revealed by the fact that the squirrels clearly have stripes down their backs, indicating that they belong to a species native to India rather than either a generic type or, as in the case of the well-known scene of *Squirrels in a plane tree* by Abu'l Hasan (British Library, Johnson Album 1, no.30), a foreign species borrowed from a European printed source (see Falk and Archer 1981, no.34, pp.59-60). Furthermore, the artist has depicted the blackbirds in the tree facing each other with their tails raised and one with its head bowed. These specific postures occur during blackbirds' courtship displays, further emphasising not only the attention to realistic detail, but also underlining the symbolism of fertility, fidelity and marital happiness inherent in the portrayal of the main scene of the family of cheetahs.

THE ARTIST

Basawan was one of the supreme artists of the royal atelier, "the preeminent artist of Akbar's reign" (Seyller 2011A, p.124). His career began around 1556 and continued throughout Akbar's reign, ending around 1600. He was revered in his own time and contributed to the majority of illustrated manuscripts produced by the imperial atelier. He was praised by Abu'l Fazl in the *Ain-i Akbari* as follows: "Basawan became the unique one in the age in outline-composition, the portraiture of faces, the blending of colours, the painting of real likenesses and other operations of this art " (translation by Simon Digby, quoted in Das 1978, p.204, fn.128, and Seyller 2011A, p.122). His style is characterised by originality of subject matter, inventive and complex compositions, graphic mastery, the use of colour to model form, sensitive depiction of volume, naturalism, empathy and psychological intensity.

Beach described Basawan as one of the great talents to flourish under Emperor Akbar, a rationalist, with an interest in physical form and texture and a sympathetic comprehension of individuality, who became the most important, prestigious and influential painter of the later years of Akbar's reign, a touchstone for judging stylistic developments and quality in Mughal painting (Beach 2009, p.268; Beach 2012, p.203). Okada described him as peerless, and perhaps the most accomplished artist of Akbar's court, who obviously took delight in depicting animals and had an impressive ability to dramatize natural forms in a stunning and mysterious way (Okada 1992, p. 80). For further discussions of Basawan see: Okada 1991; Okada 1992; Beach 1996; Beach 2009; Seyller 2011A; Welch 1961



***27**

TWO HINDU ASCETICS

THE DRAWING MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1585; THE CALLIGRAPHY SIGNED JUGAL KISHOR, MUGHAL INDIA, 18TH CENTURY

Ink and wash heightened with gold on paper, laid down between gold foliate border and black, orange and white rules on gold-flecked buff margins with outer green reinforcement paper, reverse with 4ll. black *nasta'liq* set diagonally in clouds reserved against a gold ground with flowering vine decoration laid down between blue border with gold meandering vine and gold, black and blue rules, gold-flecked buff margins with old inventory numbers, mounted
Painting 5⅛ x 3⅝in. (12.9 x 9.2cm.); calligraphy 9⅞ x 5½in. (25.1 x 14.1cm.); folio 15¼ x 10¾in. (38.7 x 27.3cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

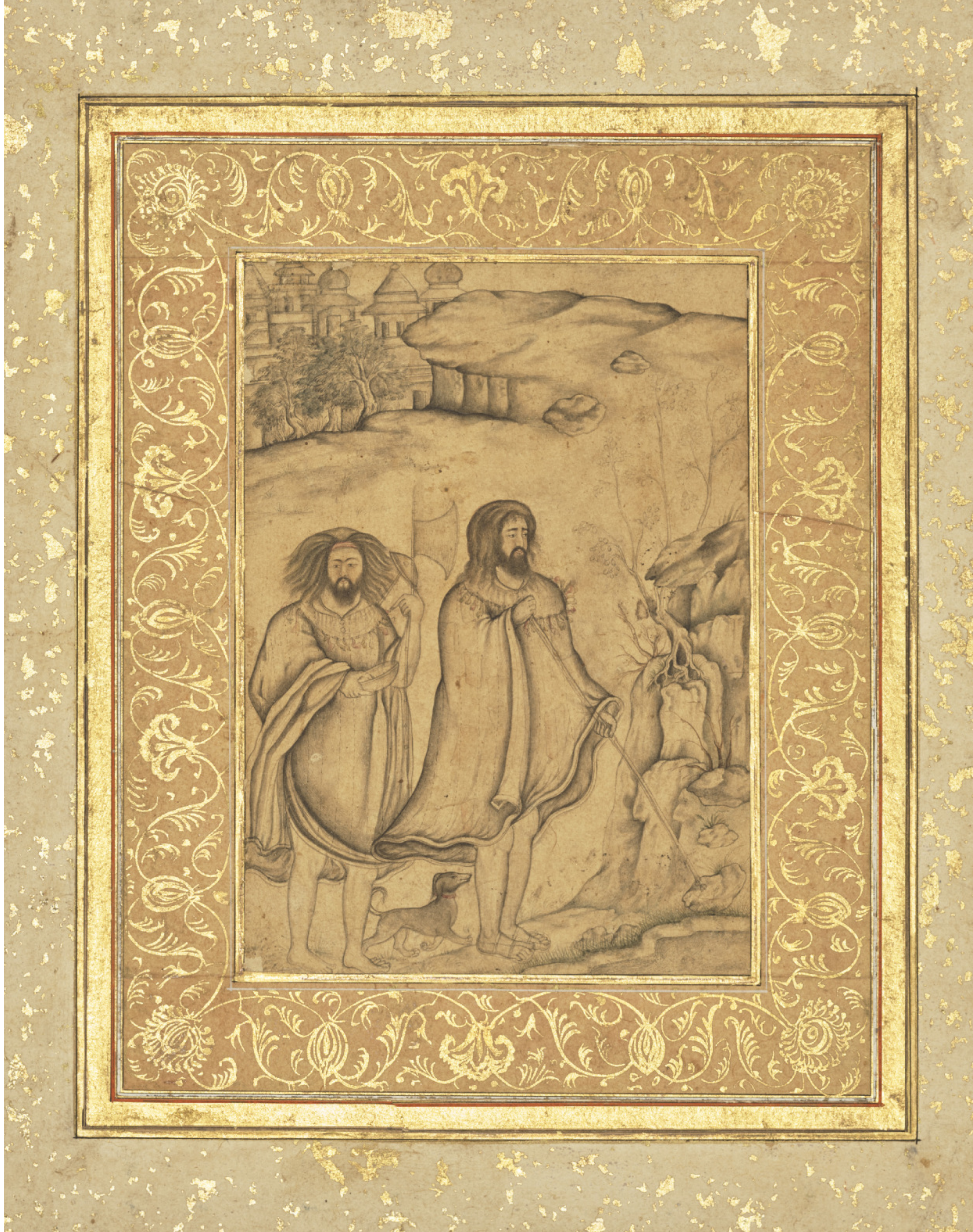
PROVENANCE:
Acquired by 1987

EXHIBITED:
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.81, pp.166-7
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.79, pp.109-10
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.79, pp.109-10

INSCRIPTIONS:
On the reverse, 'He [God] is the Almighty, the Infallible Guide | You have no friend, and no place to turn to except the dust of (His) door | The portico of your eyes, and the dwelling of your heart possess no trace of a ray of their own but for (His) light | written by Jugal Kishor'

> "Although the chances of the figures being Muslim are small, their specific creed may be less important than the impression conveyed of their reflection on the spiritual implications of choosing which direction to take on the road that lies before them"
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**



This evocative and perceptive drawing of holy men depicts a subject that was popular in Mughal India in the late 16th and early 17th century. Delicately coloured in the *nim qalam* technique, it brilliantly succeeds in drawing the viewer into the meditative world of the two ascetics, whose stark landscape setting enhances the psychological power of the image.

THE DRAWING

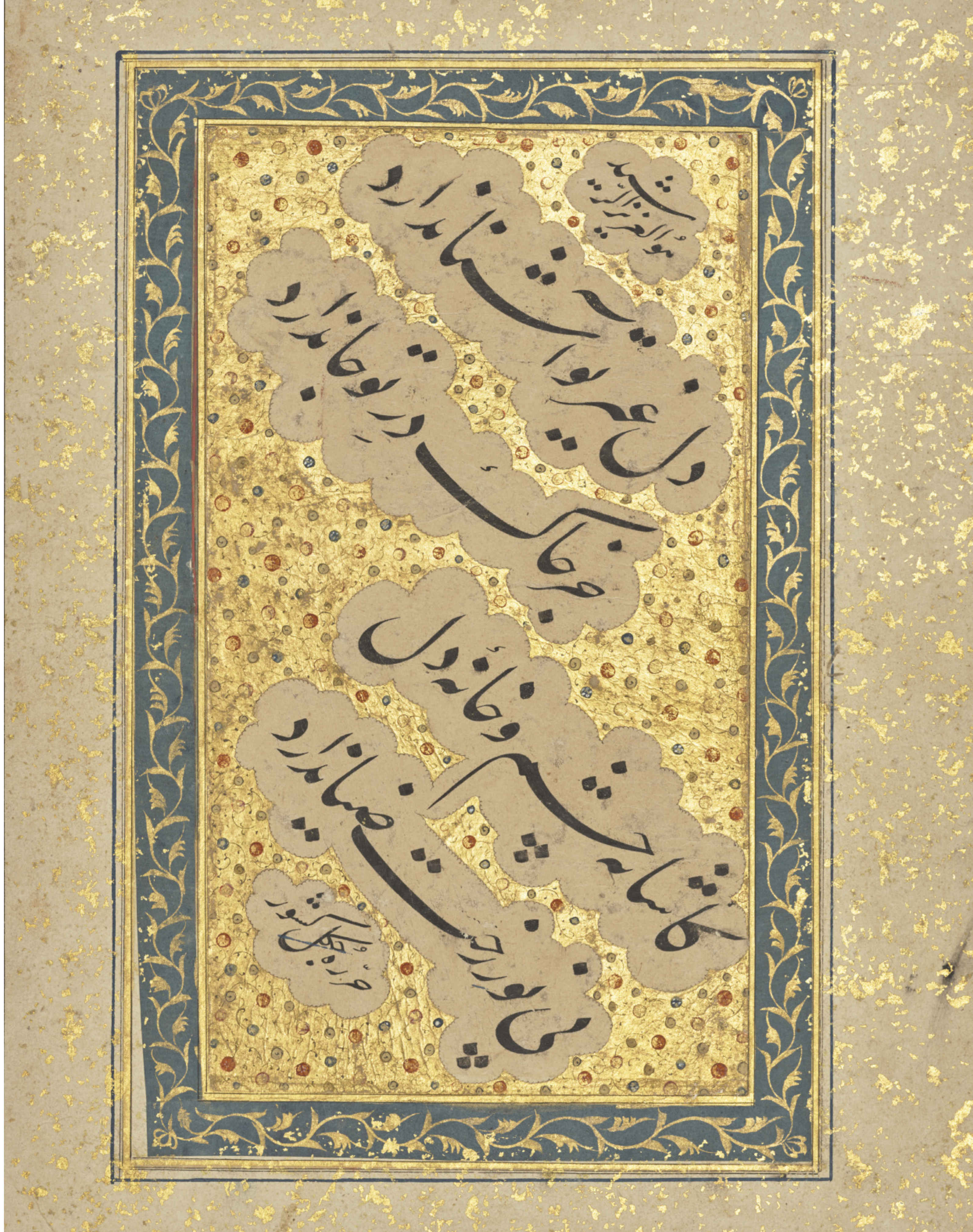
In a sparse and somewhat barren landscape, two Hindu holy men with beards and long, matted hair stand in contemplation. They wear coarse, patched cloaks with vertical threads. Each wears a necklace hung with coloured strips of cloth. The leading figure wears a pair of sandals on his feet and holds a long staff which rests on a boulder, while the figure behind is barefoot and holds an alms bowl, a simple fan, and, tucked down his back, a bowl attached to a rod. All of these garments and accoutrements appear in other Mughal images of such holy men. A cheerful dog trots at their feet. In front of them a craggy outcrop of rock blocks their path - perhaps symbolically as well as physically. A small, meagre tree with a skeletal trunk grows from the rock, along with two withered bushes. A stream flows around the base of the rock. In the distance behind the rocky horizon are three leafy trees and a townscape with towers and domes rendered in a style strongly influenced by European printed imagery. The leading figure looks into the distance as if in a trance, while his younger companion gazes almost unnervingly towards the viewer, drawing us in to his inner world. The figures appear as if frozen in time and place, conscious of the separation between the material world and their own spiritual worlds.

In an eloquent description of this drawing in 1987, Goswamy and Fischer commented "The work has much delicacy, not only of form, but of feeling...There is an emphatic feeling of bareness…[a] remarkable delicacy of modeling, and the painter shows great skill in the manner in which he handles the faces of the two men and renders their garments. But what is specially affecting is ... the feeling that permeates the work. The holy man, one senses, is clearly in search of that path which many before him have trodden. It is as if he has seen a light from a distance, but does not quite know how to reach it yet. He has turned his back on the world and there is no return to it; but what road he has to wend his way on is not yet clear. There is no unease in his situation, only uncertainty… The painter distinguishes the states of mind of the holy man and his younger disciple with wonderful sensitivity… The two men are not common mendicants but men of God…" Goswamy and Fischer 1987, p.166).

Goswamy and Fischer (ibid) and Canby (1998, p.109) dated the drawing to the 1580s, and in terms of subject matter and style it is very close to others of the period. Canby commented that it owes much to Basawan's incisive studies of ascetics, and cites the psychological acuity of the work as well as compositional and stylistic elements found in Basawan's drawings, such as the lively folds and swooping hem of the cloaks, the small jaunty dog, the townscape in the distance and the general sense of studied naturalism (Canby 1998, pp.109-10). There are several comparisons in style and subject among Basawan's signed or attributed drawings, including *Majnun and an emaciated horse* in the Indian Museum, Kolkata (see Welch 1976, no.8, pp.36-7), *A mendicant and a holy man* in the Cleveland Museum of Art (2013,296, see Quintanilla et al 2017, p.197, fig.4.57), *A Shepherd offers a flower to a holy man* in the British Library (IOL, Johnson Album, 22,13, see Losty and Roy 2012, fig.34, p.73), *A Sadhu* in the Gopal Narain Library, Bharatpur (see Sen 1982, fig.1), *Ascetics Making Bhang* in the Harvard Art Museums (2002,209,72, see Welch and Masteller 2004, no.19, p.85), and *Tobias and the Angel* (Galloway 1994, cat.1). Other Mughal drawings depicting related subjects are as follows: *A Gathering of Yogis* by Daswanth, from a late Akbar-period royal album (Royal Library, Windsor, RCIN1005062, see Hannam 2018, no.6, pp.68-9); *Three Holy Men in a Landscape* by Shankar (Sotheby's, London, 27 October 2020, lot 425); *A man and an ascetic with a dog* by Shankar (Asian Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988.27); *An Ascetic with his disciples* attributed to Kesu Khurd (Fondation Custodia, Institut Néerlandais, Paris, see Okada 1989, nos.41, pp.158-9); *An ascetic and his young disciple* (ibid, np.42, pp.160-1); and *Three ascetics in discussion* (ibid, no.43, pp.162-3). For discussions of Hindu holy men in Mughal art, see Ernst 2013, and Mallinson 2013.

THE CALLIGRAPHY AND ALBUM SETTING

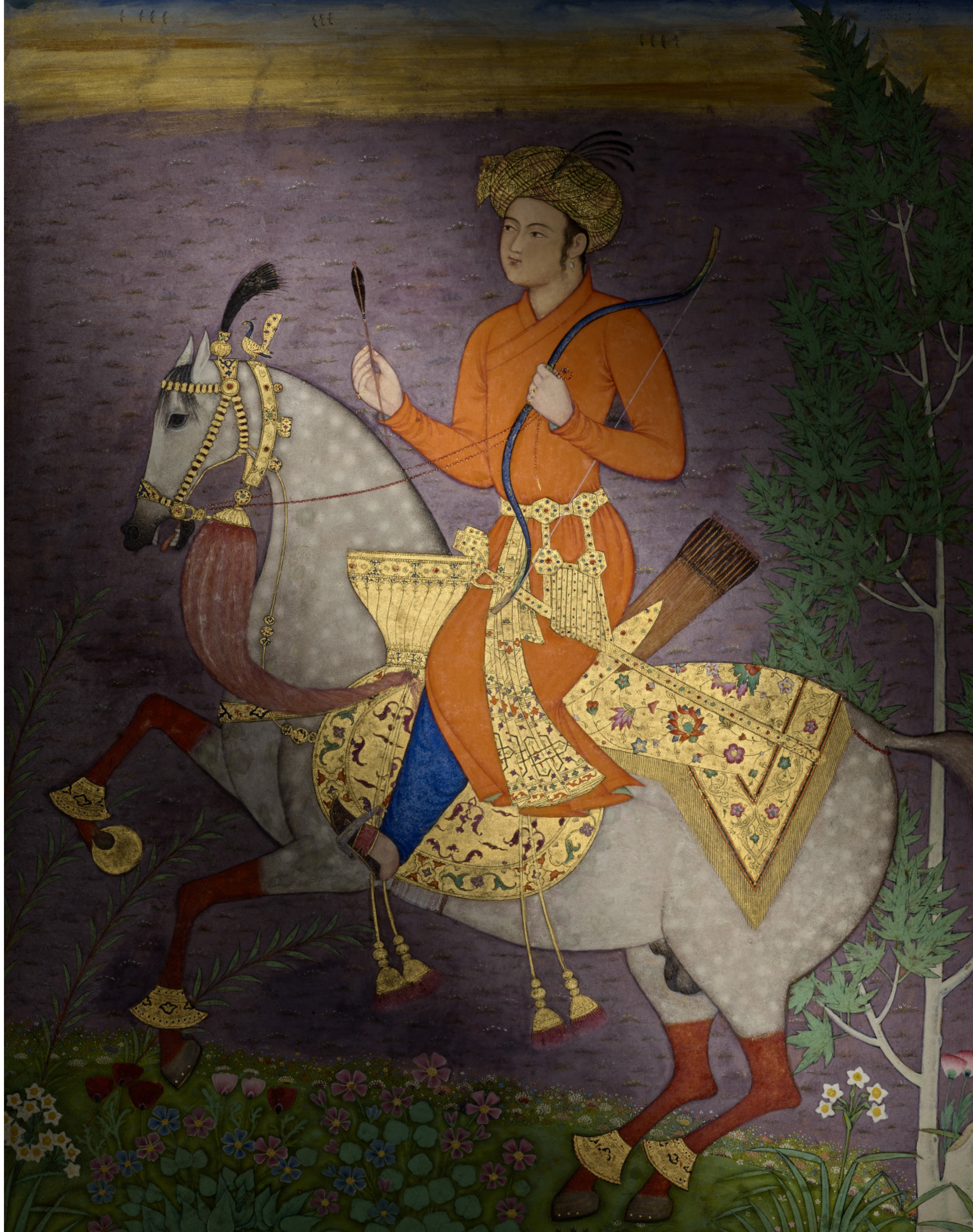
The meaning of the poetry on the reverse (see above) is appropriate for subject of the drawing, and Goswamy and Fischer commented that "The calligraphy is of more than usual interest, for even though it starts in praise of God in the approved Islamic fashion, and the verses are in Persian, it is signed by Jugal Kishor, clearly a Hindu. One is initially startled to see a Hindu name appended to lines in a script and a language that one does not easily associate with Hindus in Mughal India, but …. Like the Hindu painters working in collaboration with, or under the tutelage of, Muslim masters, Hindu calligraphers must also have bent themselves to the task of acquiring these skills." (ibid). The illumination surrounding the calligraphy is of 18th century style, as are the gold-flecked borders. The calligraphy was thus probably penned and the folio assembled between approximately 1750 and 1800. No calligrapher named Jugal Kishor appears in the principle Mughal records, but it is interesting to note that a secretary called Jugal Kishor is recorded as having been associated with Col. Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier in Awadh and Bengal in the 1770s. Jugal Kishor was one of Polier's business administrators, and Polier's letters show that they regularly corresponded in Persian (see Alam and Alavi 2001, "Jugal Kishor" as indexed). Secretaries sometimes combined roles as calligraphers and it is plausible that the calligraphy on this page was penned by the same Jugal Kishor, either during the years he worked with Polier (1773 to 1776), or prior to this or afterwards. For further information on Polier, see lots 51 and 52 in this sale. Many albums with similar gold-flecked borders were acquired by Europeans in Awadh and Bengal in the late 18th century, including one of the Warren Hastings Albums, which has almost identical dimensions to the present lot (see, e.g., Cleveland Museum of Art, acc.2013.333 and 2013.7592, see Quintanilla et al 2017, cat. 71, p.338; LACMA, M.77.154.3; Brooklyn Museum, 69.48.2; also Sotheby's, *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, 26 November 1968, lots 367-407), one of the Gentil Albums (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), the Large Clive Album (Victoria and Album Museum), and many loose folios, such as pages in the Musée Guimet, Paris (MA12234), LACMA (M.2005.159), the Victoria and Albert Museum (IS.2015-1951; IS.19.-1958; IS.15-1958), and Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (In 45.8).



Reverse

> “Paradisical in its harmoniously soaring cypress, its flowers, horse, and almost suprahumanly elegant prince, it was painted by Muhammad ‘Ali, whose career was almost as thought-provoking and delightful as the painting. Like the miniature’s present owner, Muhammad ‘Ali was an adventurous traveller. Often in the company of artist-friend and fellow Sufi, Farrukh Beg, he moved from Khurasan in Iran where he was trained to the Mughal court at Agra, and thence to Bijapur in the Deccan. He is probably the most engaging of the Turko-Indo-Iranian “little masters”, and his pictures – especially this one, achieve angelic heights. Admired as an artist (and presumably a very witty courtier) by the Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan, he was equally appreciated by the Deccani Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, who was a major patron of music, poetry, architecture, and painting. No other painted tree is quite comparable to this: taughtly and gracefully arched as a mainsail or a jib, propelled by a firm but gentle breeze”

STUART CARY WELCH



***28**

A PRINCE HAWKING

THE PAINTING ATTRIBUTED TO MUHAMMAD ALI, MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1610; THE MARGINS MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1650-58

Opaque pigments heightened with pricked gold and silver on paper, 2ll. of black *nasta'liq* above and below reserved against gold illuminated cloudbands in narrow green borders, set within ivory margins finely decorated with flowering plants in an overall lattice, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 6⅜in. (19.1 x 16.3cm.); folio 14⅜ x 9¾in. (36.5 x 24.9cm.)

£700,000-1,000,000
US$960,000-1,400,000
€810,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Baron Maurice de Rothschild (d. 1957), Paris, early 20th century, by descent to Baron Edmond de Rothschild
P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd, London, 1976

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
India, Art and Culture 1300-1900, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1985
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Chevaux et cavaliers arabes dans les arts d'Orient et d'Occident, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2002

LITERATURE:

I. Stchoukine, "Portraits moghols: IV La Collection du Baron Maurice de Rothschild", *Revue des Arts Asiatiques*, vol.9, No.4, December 1935, cat. XI, pp.202-03, pl.LXIX, fig. 6
R. Skelton, "The Mughal Artist Farrokh Beg", *Ars Orientalis*, vol.2, 1957, pl.4, fig.9
R. Ettinghausen, *Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India in American Collections,* Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 1961, pl.9 text
T. Falk, "Rothschild Collection of Mughal Miniatures", in *Persian and Mughal Art*, Colnaghi, London, 1976, no.92, pp.178-9
M. Beach, *The Grand Mogul, Imperial Painting in India 1600-1660,* Williamstown MA., 1978, p.144
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.65, pp.198-200
T. Falk and M. Archer, *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library,* London, 1981, p.61
M. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983, p.116
Kevorkian, "Les Très Riches Heures de L'Aga Khan", *Connaissance des Arts*, No.372, February 1983, fig.11, p.69
S. Safrani, "The Arts of the Islamic Book: The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan", *Arts of Asia*, vol.14, No.6, 1984, p.59
S.C. Welch, *India, Art and Culture 1300-1900*, New York, 1985, no.151, pp.229-31
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.26, pp.68-9
E. Fox, "Miniature Empires. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's Collection of Islamic Art", *Art and Auction*, October 1987, p.152
Sabahi, Taher. *Cavalieri d'Oriente.* Milan, 1991, cover illus.
S.C. Welch, "Reflections on Muhammad Ali", in A. Giese and J-C. Buegel (eds.), *Gott ist schön und Er liebt die Schönheit*, Bern, 1992, pp.408, 414, 418, fig.3
T. Sabahi, *Cavalieri d'Oriente: Coperte da cavallo e da sella dal XVII al XX secolo*, exhibition catalogue, Rome, 1991, cover illustration
S. Verma, *Mughal Painters and their Work*, Delhi, 1994, p.295, nos.5-6
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.102, pp.138-40, and cover illustration
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients*, Zurich, 1998, no.18, pp.62-3
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.102, pp.138-40, and cover illustration
H. Meyer and G. Meyer, *Pferde anders aufgezäumt streifzüge durch die Natur und Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin, 2002, no.12, p.55
B. Alaoui, J-P Digard, et al., *Chevaux et cavaliers arabes dans les arts d'Orient et d'Occident*, Paris, 2002, no.145, pp.180-1
E. Wright, *Muraqqa', Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library*, Alexandria VA. , 2008, p .465, no.92
J. Bloom and S. Blair (eds.), *The Grove Encyclopaedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, vol. 3, Oxford, 2009, pp.15-16
J. Seyller, "Muhammad Ali", in M. Beach, E. Fischer and B. Goswamy (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, I/II, Zurich, 2011, p.280, no.5, pp.284-5, fig.5

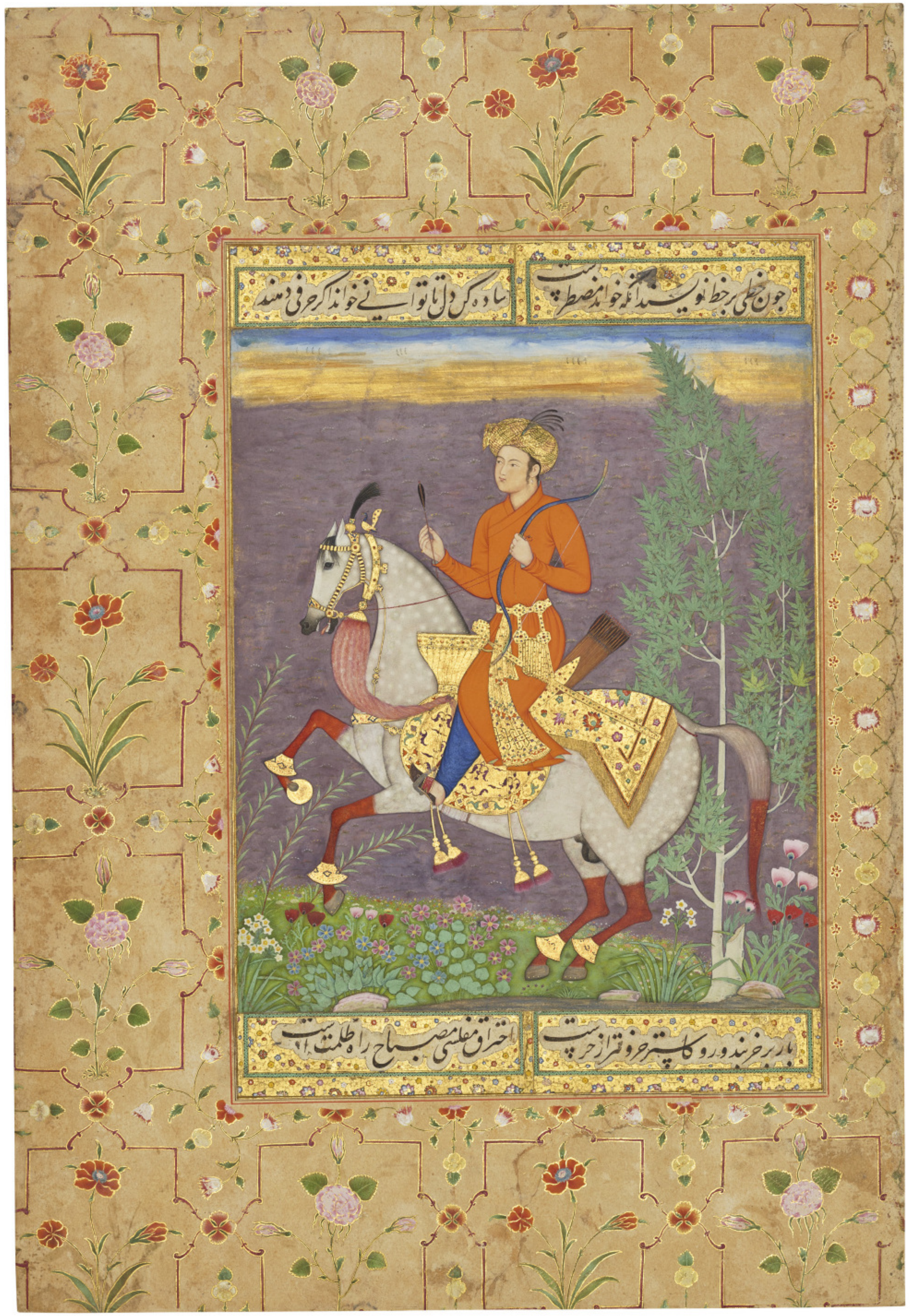
Seamlessly blending a wonderful sense of Deccani intensity and Mughal precision, this spectacular equestrian portrait by the artist Muhammad Ali delights in both the overall composition and the smaller detail. As Stuart Cary Welch wrote, "the picture is superb, ecstatic with arabesques, massed foliage, burgeoning flowers, sparkling metalwork, and a most ornamental huntsman astride a Nijinsky of a horse" (Welch 1985, p.231).

THE PAINTING

"It is the most elegant of hunts... The horse and rider are in flawless form, their demeanour exemplifying well-trained grace as they poise (and pose) in a dance of confident assurance in their own perfection. Wearing an orange robe and golden turban, the prince has picked an arrow from his quiver as his stallion – his legs and tail half-hennaed – prepares to gallop; both seem to have just spotted the game. The horse's gold saddle and saddlecloth, anklets and other accoutrements are rich with flowers, as sumptuous as any Mughal illuminated page" (Welch and Welch 1982, p.198).

As Anthony Welch so eloquently describes, our elegant prince is depicted hunting. The presence of a drum at his waist indicates that he is likely hawking but there is no bird in sight, nor any prey. The scene is not a narrative one but rather a display of courtly elegance – an idealised depiction of a handsome, young prince on his magnificent steed. Seyller writes of the way that Muhammad Ali gives secondary importance to the "selectively anatomical" features of our Prince, but "indulges the traditional Persian interest in abstract line and colour... show[ing] real verve in his use of ornament, lavishing gold and painted jewels on every part of the horse's tack" (Seyller 2011B, p.284).

The ground in our painting is alive with signs of spring. The intensity of the floral foreground draws comparison with contemporaneous Bijapuri paintings, for instance that of a *Yogini* painted in Bijapur, early 17th century and attributed to the Dublin painter by Zebrowski. It is now understood that this artist is Farrukh Beg (also known as Farrukh Husayn), with whom Muhammad Ali's career is inextricably linked (in



the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, In.11A.31; published in Zebrowski 1983, pls. XII). The vibrant ground also draws compelling comparison with other Deccani works of Farrukh Beg, for instance an extraordinary painting of *Sufis in a Landscape*, painted circa 1601-04 (published Welch 1985, p.224). Zebrowski suggested that the artist would have served as a source of inspiration for the artist Muhammad Ali and indeed that he might have copied his work for the Emperor Jahangir (Zebrowski 1983, p.116).

THE ARTIST

When Robert Skelton published our painting in *Ars Orientalis* in 1957, he attributed it to the master artist Farrukh Beg - “in this case it hardly seems necessary to recount the reasons for regarding it as Farrukh Beg’s work, for it is very characteristic of his style” (Skelton 1957, p.400). The attribution to Muhammad Ali, a close contemporary of Farrukh Beg, was first made a few years later by Richard Ettinghausen, following the emergence of new material inscribed with the artist’s name, including *Youth Reading in a Grove* in the Freer Gallery of Art (Mughal, circa 1610; F1959.93; Ettinghausen 1961, pl.9). He cites that our painting is similar to the Freer example in many details – such as the plane tree that arches gently over the rider, the series of intensely flowering plants along the lower edge and the dark background with only a narrow sliver of sky. The same distinctive plane tree and sliver of sky appear in another work attributed to Muhammad Ali in the Raza Library, Rampur. That depicts *Maulana Rum and a Student in a Garden* and is dated to circa 1610-25 (Album 4, fol.6a; Schmitz and Desai, no.4, p.30). Indeed many these features also find precedent in Farrukh Beg’s work so it is easy to see why the work of these two artists has long been so closely associated.

Muhammad Ali remains an enigmatic figure, known only from a few iconic works. These works are all imbued with Persianate subject matter, Deccani intensity and colour and Mughal details and faces. Stylistically his paintings relate closely to those of Farrukh Beg and it is likely that career paths of the two were largely in parallel. Like Farrukh Beg, a Persian émigré, it seems that Muhammad Ali moved from Iran to India at a young age. His name first appears as the colourist of three unpublished works in a copy of the *Jami’ al-Tawarikh* created for the Emperor Akbar, dated 1596 (128a, 152b and 153a; Gulistan Palace Library, Tehran, no.2254). It is then likely that he spent time at Akbar’s court before settling in Bijapur before 1600. Whilst Farrukh Beg’s sojourn in the Deccan is confirmed through an ascription on a painting of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, Muhammad Ali’s time there lacks this documentary evidence. His works however unmistakably "exude a heady bouquet of the Deccan" (Welch 1985, p.231).

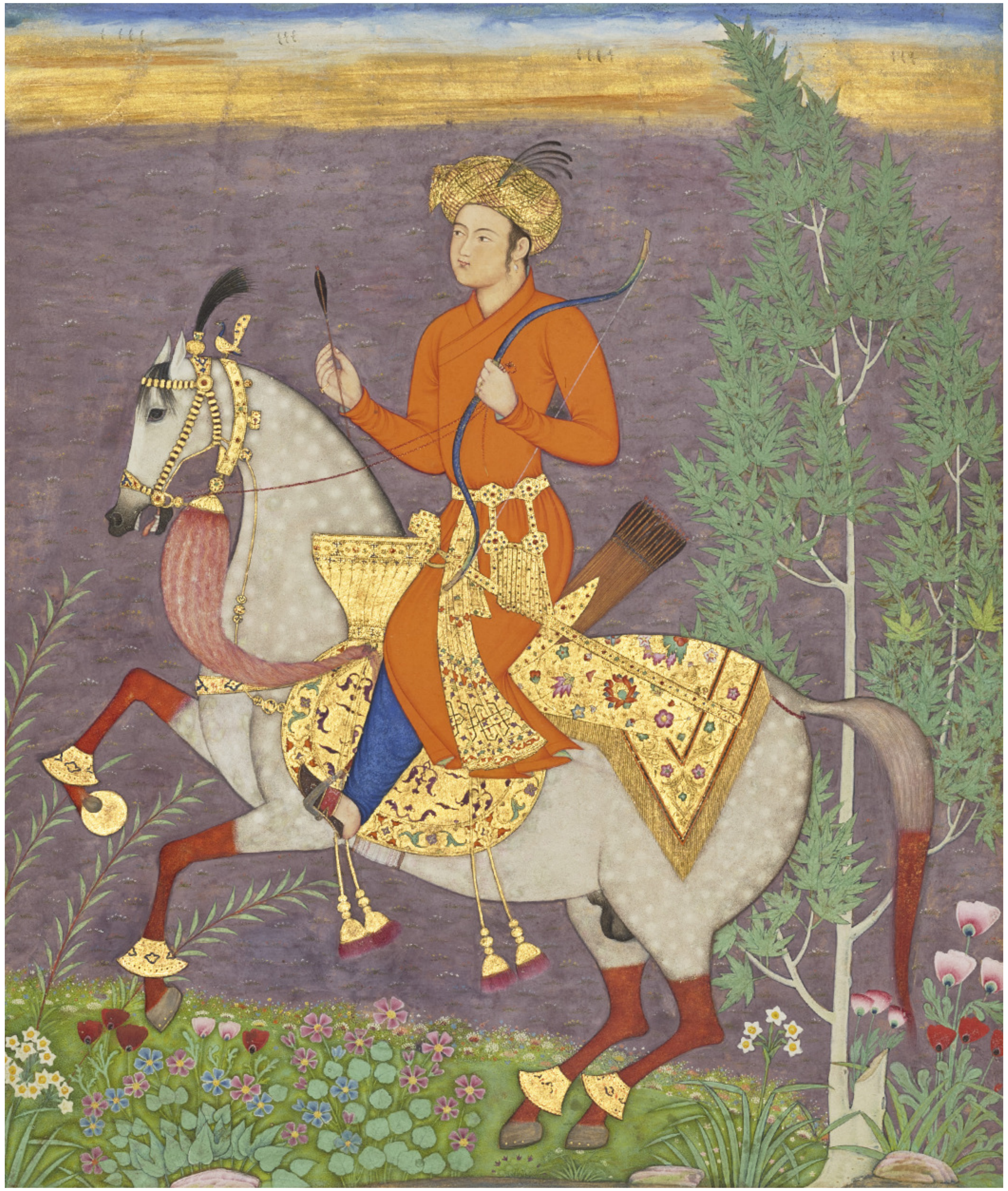
We know that Muhammad Ali, like Farrukh Beg, later moved back to the Mughal court during the reign of the Emperor Jahangir. Farrukh Beg is recorded as having returned in December 1609 and it is possibly that Muhammad Ali accompanied him. One of his known works, *A Young Woman*, in the San Diego Museum of Art (1990:323), is signed ‘work of Muhammad Ali Jahangir Shahi’, confirming that the painter was employed by the Emperor Jahangir (Seyller 2011, p.279). Two of his known works, the aforementioned *Youth Reading in a Grove* and *Scholar in a Garden* (attributed to Mughal India, circa 1610-15; in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; 14.663) are inscribed in the lower margins in Jahangir’s hand, further demonstrating this patronage. The fact that Muhammad Ali’s lyrical style found favour with Jahangir demonstrates the emperor’s abiding taste for variants of the Persian style - an aesthetic pronounced at his princely atelier at Allahabad but also evident at the imperial studio during the first ten years of his reign. It is only in subsequent years that Muhammad Ali gradually incorporated more Mughal elements into his work (Seyller 2011B, p.279).

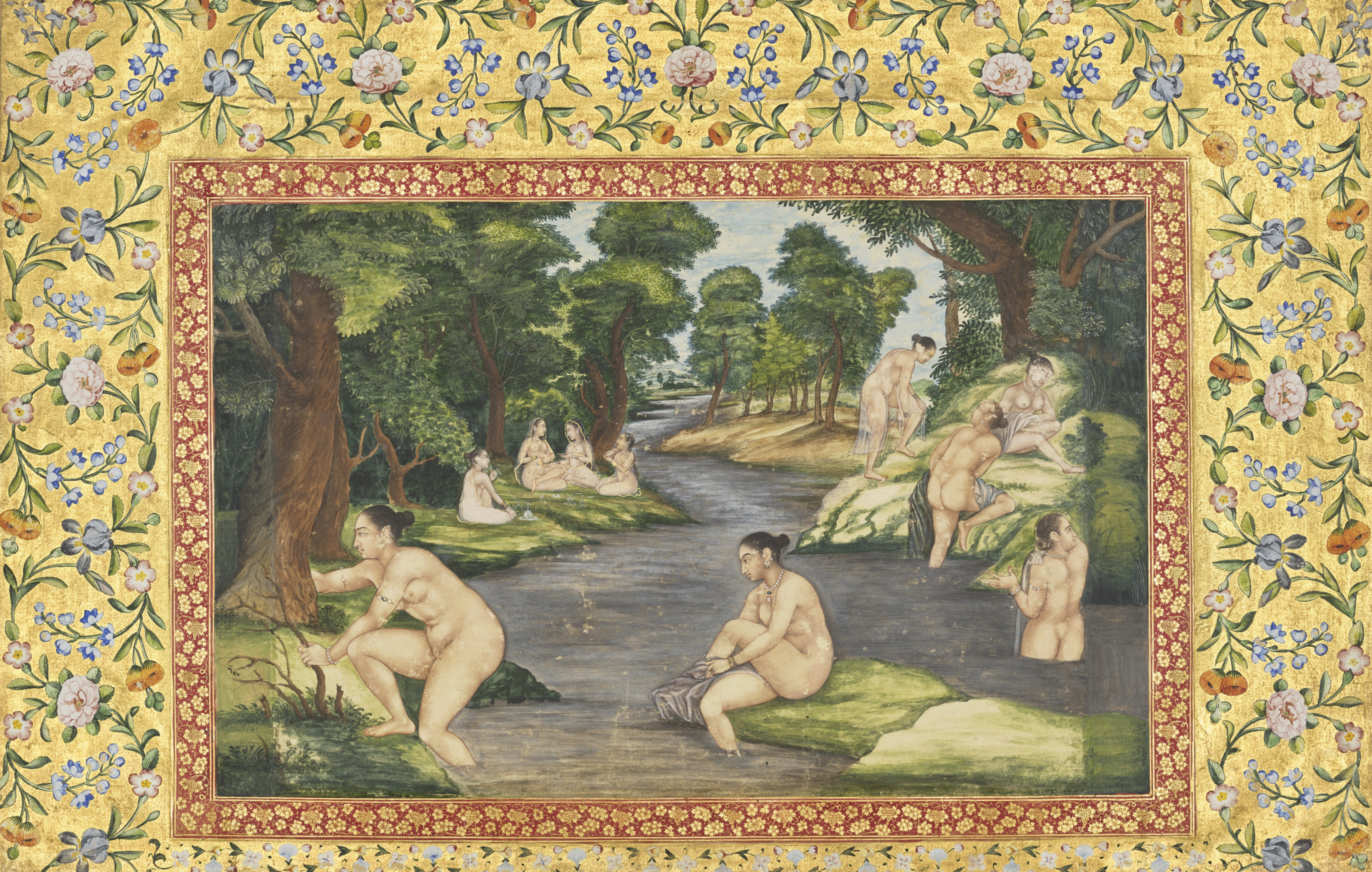
In this painting, we see Muhammad Ali’s mature style fully established – confidently blending the intensity of the Deccani experience with the Mughal technical perfection that one sees, for instance, in the horse and rider. Like the majority of Muhammad Ali’s works, it presents a single figure against a background of textured colour sprinkled with flowers and decorative vegetation (Beach 2012, p.212). As John Seyller notes, our painting’s "brilliant gallantry [is] now quite distinct from Farrukh Beg’s brooding and idiosyncratic manner" (Seyller 2011B, p.279). The painting is replete with Deccani idioms such as the hyper-real intense vegetation that fills the foreground, which shows none of the Mughal tendency for naturalism. He uses bold, contrasting colours such as the deep purple background and the earthy orange and gold of the costume. Features of our Prince’s costume - such as his elaborate sword holder – were fashionable only in the Deccan. Interestingly, the Deccani features seem to appear more prominently in paintings done in his later time in the Mughal atelier, perhaps appealing to his new patron’s desire for an exotic aesthetic and reflecting the Mughal court's growing dominance in military and diplomatic exchanges with Bijapur in which gifts of art and jewels took place.

One of Muhammad Ali’s important attributed works, an *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Danyal* (attributed to Bijapur, circa 1600-05; in a Private Collection, published Seyller 2011B, p.280, fig.1) depicts the prince with a broad, square chin and wide set eyes - features that become a hallmark of Muhammad Ali’s personal style. The painting of Prince Danyal has another feature shared with our painting. The floral decoration on the front of the saddle, there unfinished, indicates that the artist was a master in the art of illumination. In our painting, the Prince sits upon a very similar saddle, but here fully and perfectly worked. One suggestion for the relative scarcity of paintings by Muhammad Ali is that he might have worked primarily as an illuminator at the Mughal court and left Jahangir’s service early to return to Iran – certainly his skills in illumination are well-attested by his known paintings. The only evidence for this however is a painting by Reza Abbasi in the Keir Collection dated AH 1020/1611-12 AD with an inscription identifying the sitter as ‘Muhammad Ali the illuminator of Shiraz who had come from India’ (Robinson *et.al.*1976, III, no.351). If this was our Muhammad Ali however, he would only have been active at the Mughal court for a very limited period. It is more likely perhaps that this is a conflation of two individuals with a common name and of some shared skills. The reason for the paucity of Muhammad Ali’s work might instead be explained by the fact that his work has thus been defined too narrowly and is, as yet, under-studied.

THE BORDERS

This painting was later laid down on borders from the Late Shah Jahan Album (1650-58), decorated with flowering plants enclosed by linked cartouches. In this specific group of borders from the album, which were initially created to surround calligraphic panels, only two types of flowering plants are used in alternation. Elaine Wright writes that this relative simplicity is borne out of a desire for order and symmetry (Wright 2008, p.115). The elegant lattice that decorates the border draws inspiration from contemporaneous *pietra dura* inlaid stonework, such as that of the Taj Mahal, which was under construction at the time. For examples of related *pietra dura* panels that were recently exhibited at the Victoria & Albert Museum as part of *The Great Mughals* exhibition, see Stronge 2024, pp.200-201, fig.161. Another page from the Late Shah Jahan Album with a similar lattice border, and also formerly in the Baron Maurice de Rothschild Collection, is in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (inv.no.LTS1995.2.98; published in Piotrovsky 1999, p.250, no.237). Like our page, that would originally have been designed to frame a calligraphic panel but has had a Mughal portrait of a young Shah Shuja, dateable to circa 1620, inserted into it.





A FOLIO FROM THE ST. PETERSBURG ALBUM

***29**

WOMEN BATHING IN A RIVER

THE PAINTING MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1680, WITH EXTENDED AREA SIGNED MAHMUD; THE CALLIGRAPHY SIGNED IMAD AL-HASSANI, SAFAVID IRAN, EARLY 17TH CENTURY; MARGINS SIGNED MUHAMMAD BAQIR AND MUHAMMAD HADI, ZAND IRAN, DATED AH 1172/1758-9 AD

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the painting based on a European print by Aegidius Sadeler II, extended at left and right edges with the signature at lower left of extended painted surface, within red borders decorated with gold grape vine, the margins painted with flowers and meandering vine reserved against a gold ground, upper margin signed, reverse with three panels *nasta'liq* and *siyah mashq* on the diagonal in clouds reserved against gold ground, two panels signed, within red borders with gold floral meander, the navy blue margins with gold scrolling foliate motifs, lower left margin signed and dated, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 11⅞in. (19.2 x 30.3cm.); calligraphy panel 11⅞ x 9in. (30.2 x 22.8cm.); folio 11¾ x 18⅛in. (30 x 46cm.)

£120,000-180,000
US$170,000-240,000
€140,000-210,000

PROVENANCE:
Adrienne Minassian, New York, 1978

EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3

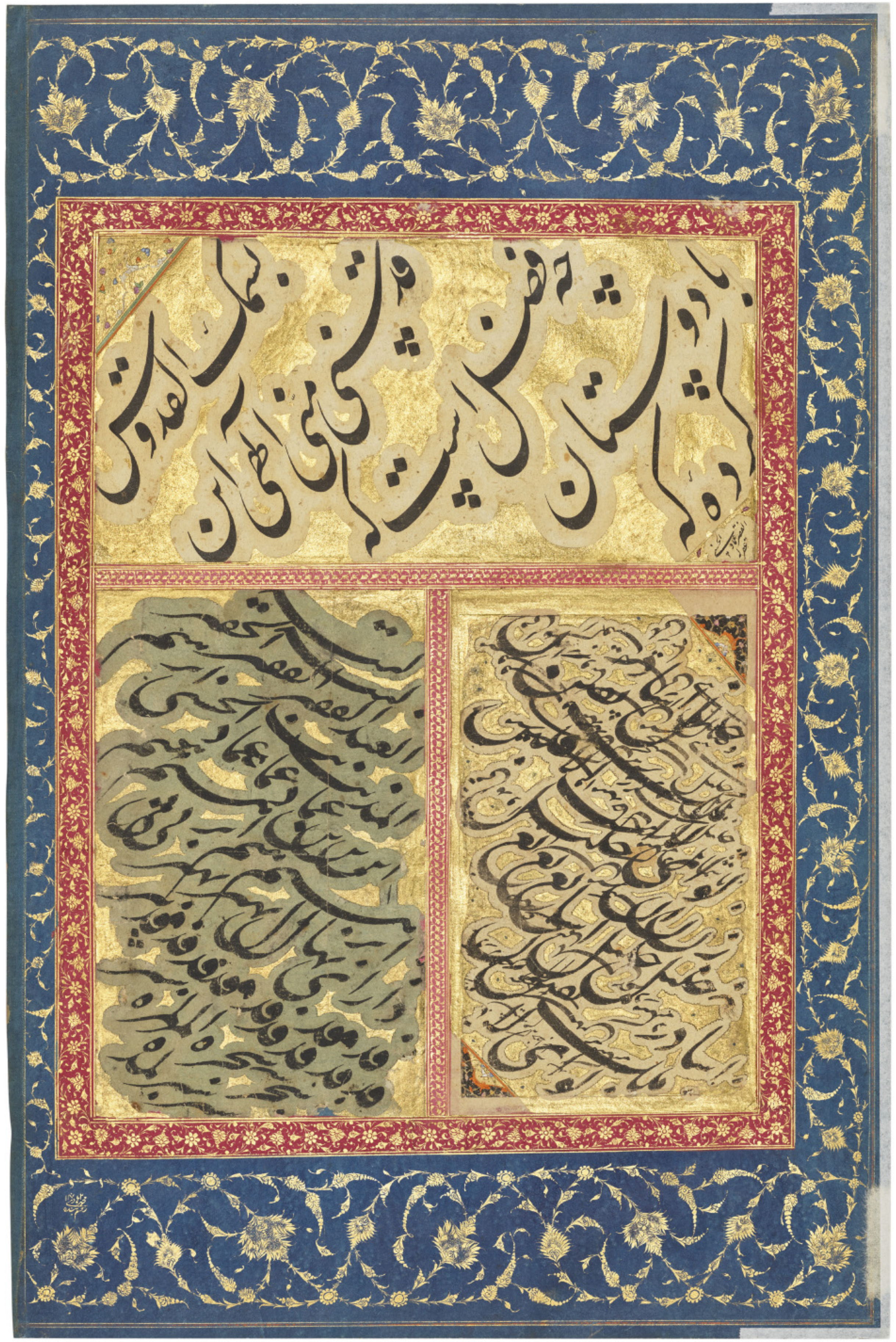
LITERATURE:
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.78, pp.231-3
A. Ivanov, G. Bailey, M. Beach, S.C. Welch, M.L. Swietechowski, N. Najat Haidar, O. Akimushkin, T. McInerney, *The St. Petersburg Muraqqa' Album of Indian and Persian Miniatures from the 16th through the 18th Century and Specimens of Persian Calligraphy by Imad al- Hassani,* Lugano and Milan, 1996, pl.234, pp.125-6, and colour facsimile
A. Adamova, *Medieval Persian Painting, The Evolution of an Artistic Vision*, (tr. and ed. M. Rogers), New York, 2008, fig.89, p.91

INSCRIPTIONS:
The border of the recto signed, 'Raqam-i kamtarin Muhammad Baqir'
The border of the verso signed, 'Raqam bandieh Muhammad Hadi 1172'

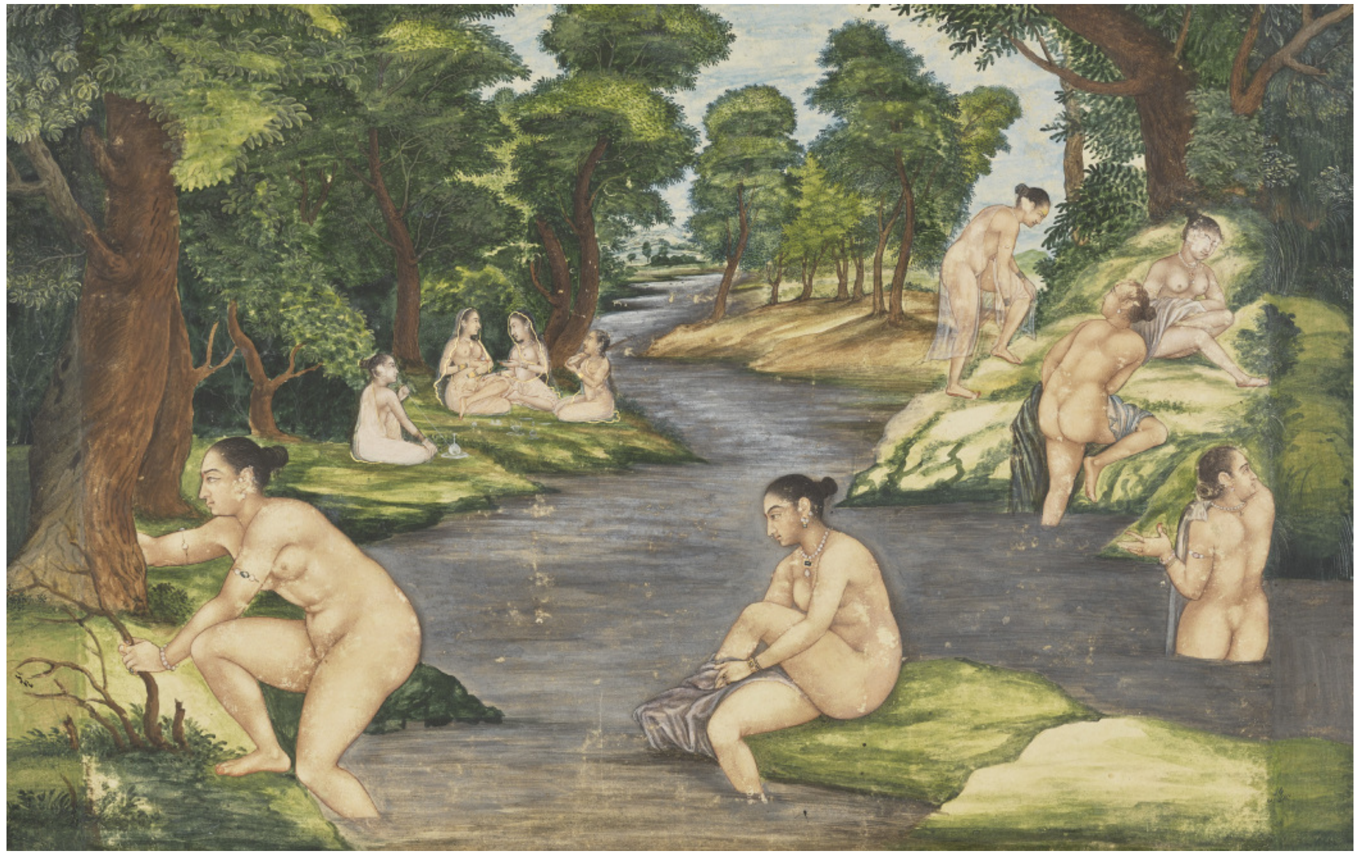
> "In the middle ground sit four women, enjoying the shade and conversation: the group conforms to similar compositions in many late Mughal paintings. But the six women do not; they are strongly influenced, as is the landscape itself, by European prints"
>
> **ANTHONY WELCH**

This is an important double-sided folio from the well-known album known as the "St. Petersberg *Muraqqa*". On one side is a Mughal painting derived from a European print and on the other are three specimens by the Safavid master calligrapher Imad al-Hassani. The margins and borders of both sides are splendidly decorated by the leading painters of the Afsharid court.

The painting is an Indian reimagining of a Sadeler engraving *Amore Letheo* (see Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-0B-33.686), which itself derives from the painting *Amori* by Franck Pauwels, circa 1585-89, which is in the Kunst Historisches Museum, Vienna (Gemäldegalerie, 2363). Our artist has carefully studied the source, including the overall composition, before giving the women Indian heads and embellishing them with luxurious gem-set necklaces, bracelets and *bazubands*. The artist further transforms the scene into one more familiar to a Mughal audience with the addition of the group of four ladies sat on the far bank which departs from the grouped figures in the *Amore Letheo*. Two women sit listening to a third playing music and the fourth, sat slightly apart from the others, smokes a *huqqa*. Compared to the six women depicted in the manner of the source material, this group of four are far more in keeping with Mughal painting. Another study of the Sadeler image is in the Musée Guimet, Paris (Inv. No. MA1032;P221). Dated to the mid-eighteenth century (Welch 1983, no.79), it shows three of the women from the same engraving - only one fully painted - but situated in a more compact arrangement than our painting.



Reverse



As is the case for many paintings in the St. Petersburg *muraqqa* the painting has been later extended on the left and right sides to fit the format of the margins. However, our painting may be the only one where the painting extensions have been signed, in this case "Mahmud". It is unlikely that this is the identity of the original painter because it is most plausible that the extensions were created at the time of mounting the works in the Afsharid margins and borders, even if the curation of some of the paintings had been decided in the Muhammad Shah iteration of the album. If Mahmud was responsible for extending the paintings in the Mashhad atelier, why did he not sign others? Or could Mahmud be an attribution that the painting came with - either documented or verbally - when it arrived in Iran with the rest of the material from Muhammad Shah's library?

The painting was almost certainly placed opposite a similar painting from a folio of the St. Petersburg *Muraqqa* which was sold in these Rooms, 25 April 2013, lot 49 (and previously Sotheby's London, 12 October 1990, lot 130). That painting, similarly dated to 1680, depicts eight women at a riverbank bathing, washing clothes and fetching water, however they are being watched by Krishna who is hiding in the trees (in a manner reminiscent of the well-known episode of Krishna spying on the gopis). As per the intended layout of the *muraqqa* both paintings are set within beautiful matching floral margins against a brilliant gold ground. The margins on our folio as well as the pendant folio are signed by Muhammad Baqir, one of the three artists known to have worked on the decoration and composition of the St. Petersburg *muraqqa* alongside Muhammad Hadi and Muhammad Sadiq. Muhammad Baqir signed twenty-five margins of the known folios but the majority of the minor borders on a crimson ground can also be attributed to him (Ivanov in Arte *et al.* 1996, p.28). For a full description of Muhammad Baqir and his work refer to the note for lot 88.

Muhammad Hadi carried out the majority of the work on the margins but was responsible for all the gold illuminated blue margins around the calligraphic panels, of which eighty-two are signed and dated between 1747-59. Little is known of the life and work of Muhammad Hadi, but B.W. Robinson confirms that a man of that name was seen in Shiraz on the 10th September 1821 by the English traveller Claudius Rich who described him as a very old man who no longer practiced his art (Robinson 1967, no.94, p.78), although this could have been a different Muhammad Hadi. It is worth mentioning that he also described him as amongst "the most distinguished artists in Persia passionately fond of flowers" (Robinson 1967, p.78). If the Muhammad Hadi in Rich's account and the artist who worked on the St. Petersburg *Muraqqa* are the same, then he would have been over ninety years old on Rich's sighting. This means he would have been relatively young when he undertook the commission for this album which would reflect his talent as an artist to have the status to have been invited to work on such a project at a young age (Arte *et al.* 1996, p.27). Diba records him as an illuminator who specialized in floral designs. He is also known to have worked on a number of other works including a *qalamdan* which was formerly in the Niyavaran Palace Collection and which is dated AH 1148/1735-36 AD and many single leaves of narcissus, carnations and roses (Diba 1989, p.154).

All the calligraphic specimens in the St. Petersburg *Muraqqa* are the work of Mir Imad al-Hassani, whose signature is found on two of the three specimens found here. Two of the specimens are *siyah mashq,* one of which is signed (*al-haqir al-mudhnib imad al-hasani ibn ibrahim).* The unsigned specimen contains verses from Jami's *Yusuf wa Zulaykha*, written over a ground of *nasta'liq* which includes a line from a *ghazal* by Amir Khusraw. The third specimen is in *nasta'liq.* It is also signed (*al-faqir imad al-hasani*) and contains text from the *Munajat* of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari.

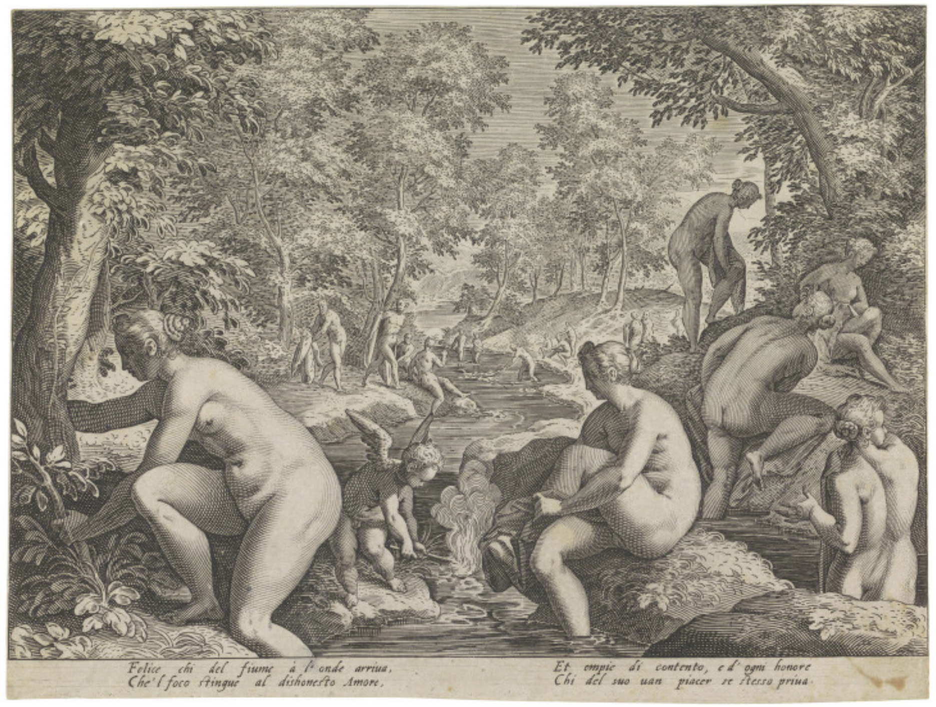
Considered one of the three colossi of Persian calligraphy (Akimushkin in Arte et al 1996, p. 40), Mir Imad was born around the year AH 961/1553-4 AD in Qazwin, the capital of Safavid Iran. He moved to Tabriz where he was apprenticed to the master Muhammad Husayn Tabrizi, moving back to the capital on completion of his studies with Malik Daylami in AH 981/1573-4 AD. As was customary, he travelled as an itinerant craftsman before becoming appointed as personal calligrapher to Shah Abbas after the relocation of the capital to Isfahan in 1597-98. He would later suffer from court intrigues, losing favour and was murdered in AH 1024/1615-16 AD by an agent of the Shah.

As is the case for the present lot, the majority of paintings in the St. Petersburg *Muraqqa* are from Mughal India and date between the mid-16th century and shortly before 1739 when Nadir Shah Afshar (r. 1736-1747) sacked Delhi. A smaller number of paintings are from 17th and 18th century Iran. The exact circumstances of the album's commission are unknown but the album is thought to have been assembled in Afsharid Mashhad between 1747-59 (despite the binding by renowned lacquer artist Ali Ashraf being dated slightly earlier) during the period of relative stability of Nadir Shah's grandson Shahrukh (1748-96). Since Shahrukh was blinded in 1750 the most likely patron is Mirza Mahdi Khan Astarabadi, Nadir Shah's biographer and trusted secretary (Fraser 2021, pp.187-88). Perhaps Asterabadi intended to use the album as a triumphant memorial to the victories of Nadir Shah through the assembling of his exquisite artistic spolia and therefore establish cultural and political legitimacy for Afsharid rule (Botchkareva 2018). Nonetheless, unfinished folios indicate that the project was never completed, probably due to the death of Astarabadi, which occurred sometime between 1759 and 1768, and the resulting disintegration of the atelier in Mashhad (Fraser 2021, p.188).

The album remained in Iran until the early 20th century when material from the Qajar Royal Library was being sold (Archives 1909, p.6). A large group of folios and the original binding were bought by Tsar Nicholas II and sent to the Museum of Alexander III, St Petersburg, giving the album the name it is now known by (first published by Ivanov *et al.* 1962). At least twenty six folios are in European or American private or public collections. In 1912 the Metropolitan Museum purchased one leaf which appears to be the earliest known provenance not in St. Petersburg. Another six important folios were then sold to the Freer Gallery, Washington D.C. in 1931.

The known folios are unpaginated and a number of those recognised more recently have been split but efforts have been made reconstitute the album and its structure (Arte *et al* 1996; Adamova, 2008). We do know that the manuscript runs in bifolios of matching marginal decoration comprising two facing paintings alternating with bifolios of calligraphic samples. Adamova proposes chapter-like groupings consisting of: royal audience scenes, battles and hunts, imperial portraiture, royal gatherings with holy men, genre scenes, and finishing with bird, animal and plant paintings. The present lot is grouped with the genre scenes, many of which are derived from European prints and models. It is likely that many of the Indian paintings were previously organised and mounted in pairs prior to moving to Iran with early iterations of the final album existing under Shah Jahan and later Muhammad Shah. The influence of European artistic models is evident in the painting mounted in our folio and others from the surrounding section of the album. Interestingly Adamova also suggests that the curation and ordering of the album was also influenced by European prints because the seventeenth century volumes of Netherlandish engravings so loved by Jahangir and Shah Jahan were curated by subject-matter and not by artist or period (Adamova 2008, p. 97).

Other than the aforementioned folios, other folios from the St. Petersburg *Muraqqa* are in the Musee du Louvre, Paris (no. 7.171), the Royal Ontario Museum (no. 924.12.146) and the Art and History Trust Collection (Soudavar 1992, no. 131). Further pages have been sold at auction. These include one sold in these Rooms 21 April 2016, lot 19; 26 April 2012, lot 319; 25 April 2013, lot 49; two sold 8 October 1991, lots 50-51;. A calligraphic folio from the album sold 25 April 2013, lot 49. Most recently a folio was sold at Bonhams, London, 12 November 2024, lot 155.


Felice chi del fiume à l'onde arriua,
Che'l foco stingue al dishonesto Amore,
Et empie di contento, e d'ogni honore
Chi del suo uan piacer se stesso priua.

Amore Letheo, Aegeidius Sadeler II after Frank Pauwels, 1589-95, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-0B-35.686

***30**

A LADY SEATED ON A TERRACE

ATTRIBUTED TO KALYAN DAS (CHITARMAN II), MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1720-40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down between gold-flecked orange, blue, and cream borders, wide gold-flecked orange margins, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5⅞ x 4⅜in. (14.8 x 11.2cm.); folio 16⅛ x 12¼in. (41 x 31cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 23

This refined and intimate painting depicts a richly adorned lady seated on a low marble terrace, surrounded by the delicate luxuries of a Mughal courtly life. Attributed to Chitarman II, also known as Kalyan Das, this work exemplifies the artistic style that flourished at the Mughal court during the early 18th century, particularly under the patronage of Emperor Muhammad Shah (r.1719-1748). The artist presents a confident, poised figure reclining gracefully against a large decorative bolster, her translucent blouse loosely draped to expose her breasts, a common motif in portraits of high-ranking courtesans or noblewomen, intended to convey both sensuality and refinement.

Set against a clean, solid white architectural wall, the woman's upper body is framed by a green field sprinkled with delicate floral blooms, providing contrast and visual depth. The lower half of the composition offers a closer view of her hands and feet, as well as the luxurious objects carefully arranged around her. To her side rests a white enamel *surahi*, a traditional wine flask prized for its elegance, alongside a blue and white ceramic wine cup that hints at imported Chinese or Deccani ware, reflecting the refined tastes of the Mughal elite. A blue-glass spittoon, another sign of aristocratic domestic culture, is placed nearby. At her feet sits a shallow tray bearing split pomegranates and mangoes, suggestive of fertility and abundance, as well as betel leaves (*paan*), which were often served after meals and associated with intimacy, pleasure, and courtly decorum.

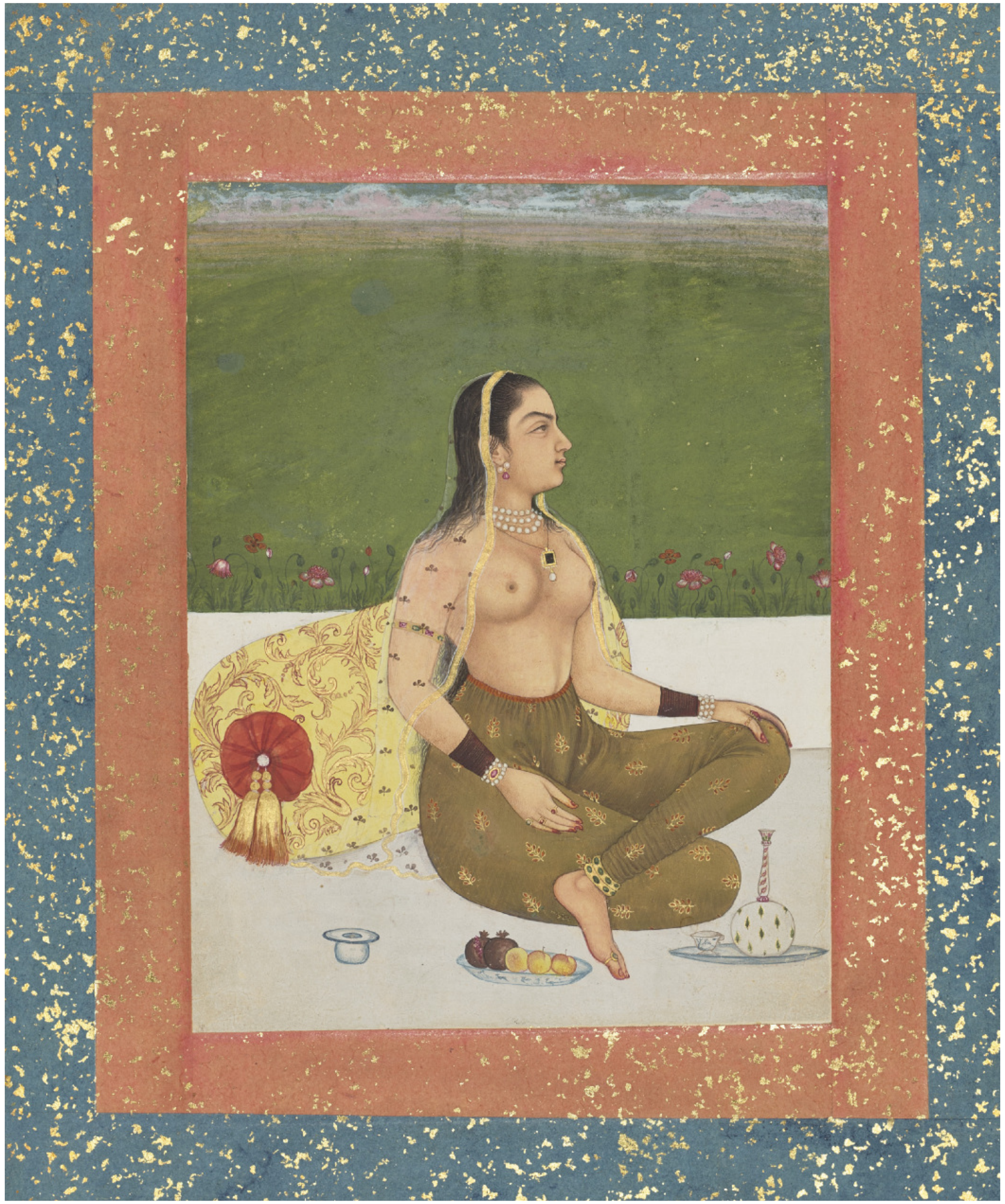
The presence of these objects, along with the lady's manicured fingernails, possibly painted, indicate not only luxury but also a deliberate emphasis on cultivated beauty and leisure. The richly ornamented textile carpet and intricately patterned bolster, adorned with baroque scrolling floral motifs, echo the broader visual language of late Mughal decorative art and further frame the sitter within a context of elegance and ease.

The striking scale of the figure in relation to the background, combined with her robust physique, suggests that this is not a generic type but likely a portrait of a specific individual, possibly a courtesan of status. Her features, large almond-shaped eyes, well-defined lower eyelids, thick, arched eyebrows, and the naturalistic modeling of the nose and mouth, show a high degree of observation and individualization, consistent with other female portraits from this period. A comparable example signed by Kalyan Das can be found in the British Library (formerly India Office Library) and is published in Falk and Archer 1981, p.427, no.199, where a similarly posed and styled lady is depicted with comparable facial features and bodily proportions.

The compositional sophistication also speaks to Kalyan Das's training and legacy. The use of the white terrace wall to divide the pictorial space and guide the viewer's eye reflects a keen understanding of spatial composition. The juxtaposition of textures, marble, cloth, enamel, and fruit, demonstrates his remarkable ability to capture materiality with delicate brushwork and subtle shading. His treatment of textiles is especially noteworthy, with the folds of the woman's diaphanous blouse and the pleats of her lower garment rendered in fine, fluid lines that convey both weight and movement.

This painting is an outstanding example of late Mughal portraiture, where the focus shifted from grand court scenes to more private, psychologically nuanced depictions of women in domestic settings. The composition, marked by its sensual elegance, refined detailing, and emotional immediacy, speaks to the painterly skill and visual language of Chitarman II (Kalyan Das). Active during a transitional moment in Mughal art, his work bridges the grandeur of the 17th century atelier with the increasingly personal and romanticized aesthetic of the 18th century.

This portrait not only exemplifies the sophisticated tastes of the Muhammad Shah court but also provides rare insight into the lives, appearances, and social presence of elite women within the Mughal world. It stands as a compelling testament to the enduring appeal of Mughal miniature painting at its most intimate and refined.



In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol. Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.

***31**

A KNEELING YOUTH IN A RED ROBE

PROBABLY GOLCONDA, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1630

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down between narrow gold-flecked orange borders, gold and polychrome rules, the salmon-pink margins decorated with gold floral and foliate motifs, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 6 x 3¼in. (15.3 x 8.3cm.); folio 12⅝ x 8⅛in. (32.1 x 20.7cm.)

£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

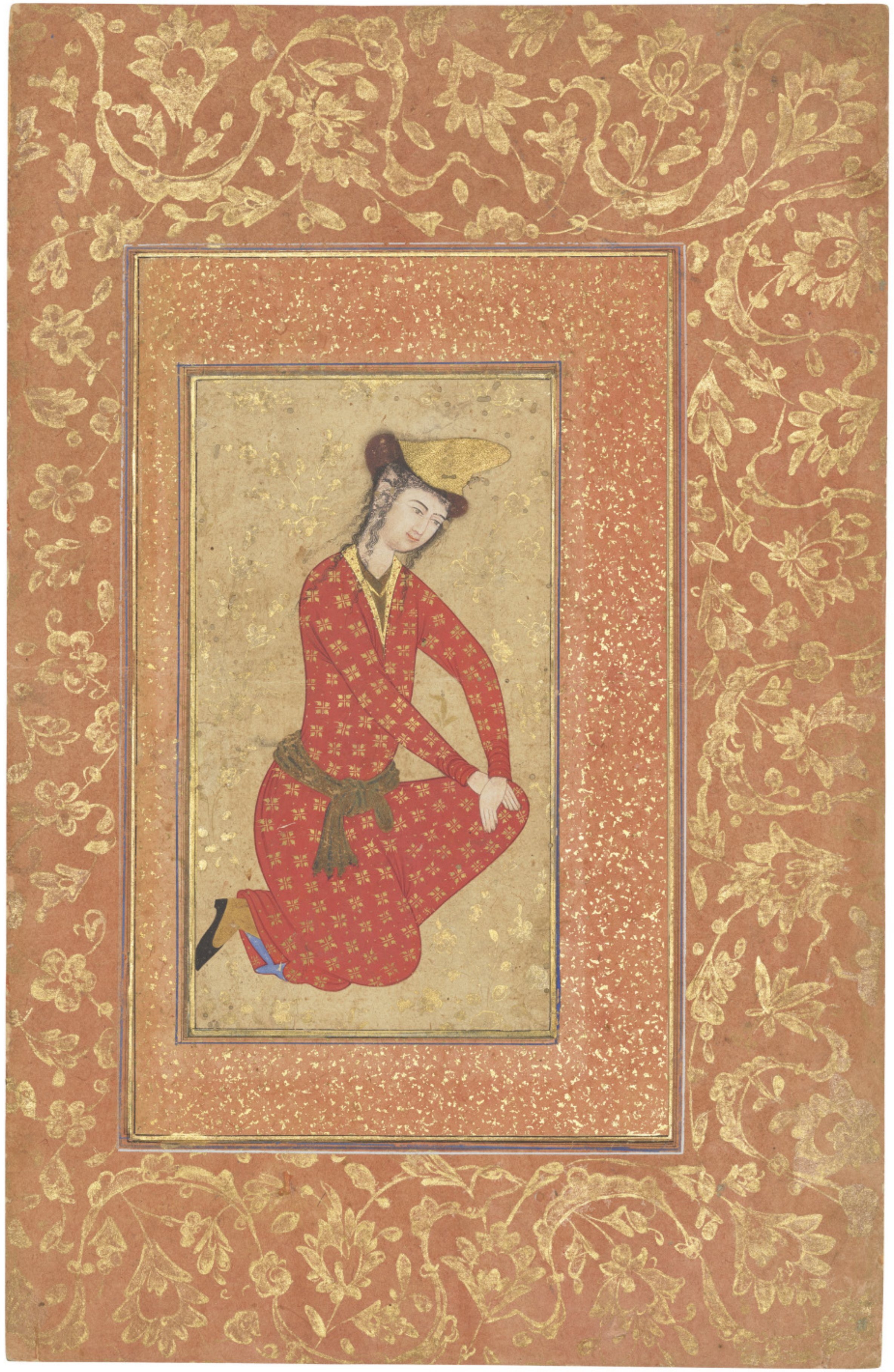
PROVENANCE:
Adrienne Minassian, New York, 1969

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol.III, 1978, pp.110-11

The rulers of Golconda were enthusiastic patrons of art, and their court attracted many artists from abroad. Mark Zebrowski commented that "painting in almost pure Safavid, Turkish and Mughal styles continued throughout the history of the sultanate, suggesting that the Qutb Shahi sultans not only welcomed artists from all over the Muslim world, but encouraged them to retain their original styles" (Zebrowski 1983, p.13). Not only did they retain styles, but many artists brought with them whole compositions. Navina Haidar publishes a Deccani painting of a woman applying henna to her feet, for instance, which is very similar to a Safavid painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc.no.55.121.21, published Haidar, 2018, pp.47-8). A standing figure in an album in the Raza Library, Rampur is also self-consciously in the style of Reza Abbasi (Schmitz and Desai 2007, pl.23). Though both are based on Safavid compositions, they have typical Golconda faces, as does ours.

The figure in this painting is in a pose which connects it to several Safavid paintings and drawings which show a kneeling figure, of which lot 75 in this sale is a fine example from the late 16th century (see that lot note for a longer discussion of this subject). As well as a matching pose, the fur hat here seems to be an evolution of that in the earlier painting. This similarity has been a source of confusion in the past: when this painting was published in 1978, Anthony Welch described the figure as being "akin to" the work of Mirza Ali, and suggested that the face may have been repainted in the style of Muhammad Yusuf. However, close examination of the painting does not give any evidence of repainting. A Deccani origin is a more convincing explanation of the picture's apparent eclecticism.

The evolution and geographic spread of the iconography of this kneeling figure is interesting. Although it appears in pen-and-ink drawings from as early as the mid-16th century, the earliest version that we have been able to find in which the figure wears an orange robe is in an album in the Muzeum Narodowe, Krakow (Zygulski 1989, no.31, p.24, front cover illustration). That example was Safavid in origin, and attributed to the 17th century. However, the orange-robed figure soon began to appear in other contexts. Gwendolyn Collaço has identified this figure appearing in paintings executed in the Ottoman Empire. The kneeling figure appears twice – once in an orange robe and once in a blue robe– on folio 8v. of the Ahmed I Album, compiled around 1617, and today in the Topkapi Palace Library, Istanbul (acc.no.B.408). The figure appears again in a larger image in an Ottoman album in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Arabe 6076, fol.7b). Clearly the figure seemed exotic to a Turkish audience, since a contemporary label identified the figure as the Mughal Princess Banu Shah (Collaço 2021, figs.7 and 9). The fact that the same figure should appear in Ottoman, Deccani, and Safavid paintings should come as no surprise, demonstrating the interconnected network of art, artists, and cultural expressions across the Muslim world in the early 17th century.



***32**

SULTAN ABU'L-HASAN QUTB SHAH OF GOLCONDA (R.1672-86)

GOLCONDA, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1670-90

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down on narrow ivory and silver card borders, reverse plain with old Bikaner collection stamp, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10¾ x 8⅝in. (27.3 x 21.8cm.); folio 11¼ x 9⅛in. (28.6 x 23.3cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maharaja Anup Singh of Bikaner, ex. Adoni Fortress Collection, 1689-91
Cyrus Gallery, New York, 2001

EXHIBITED:
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
H. Goetz, *Art and Architecture of Bikaner State,* New Delhi, 1950, p.107, illustrated p.177, fig.90
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.119, pp.160-1
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.119, pp.160-1

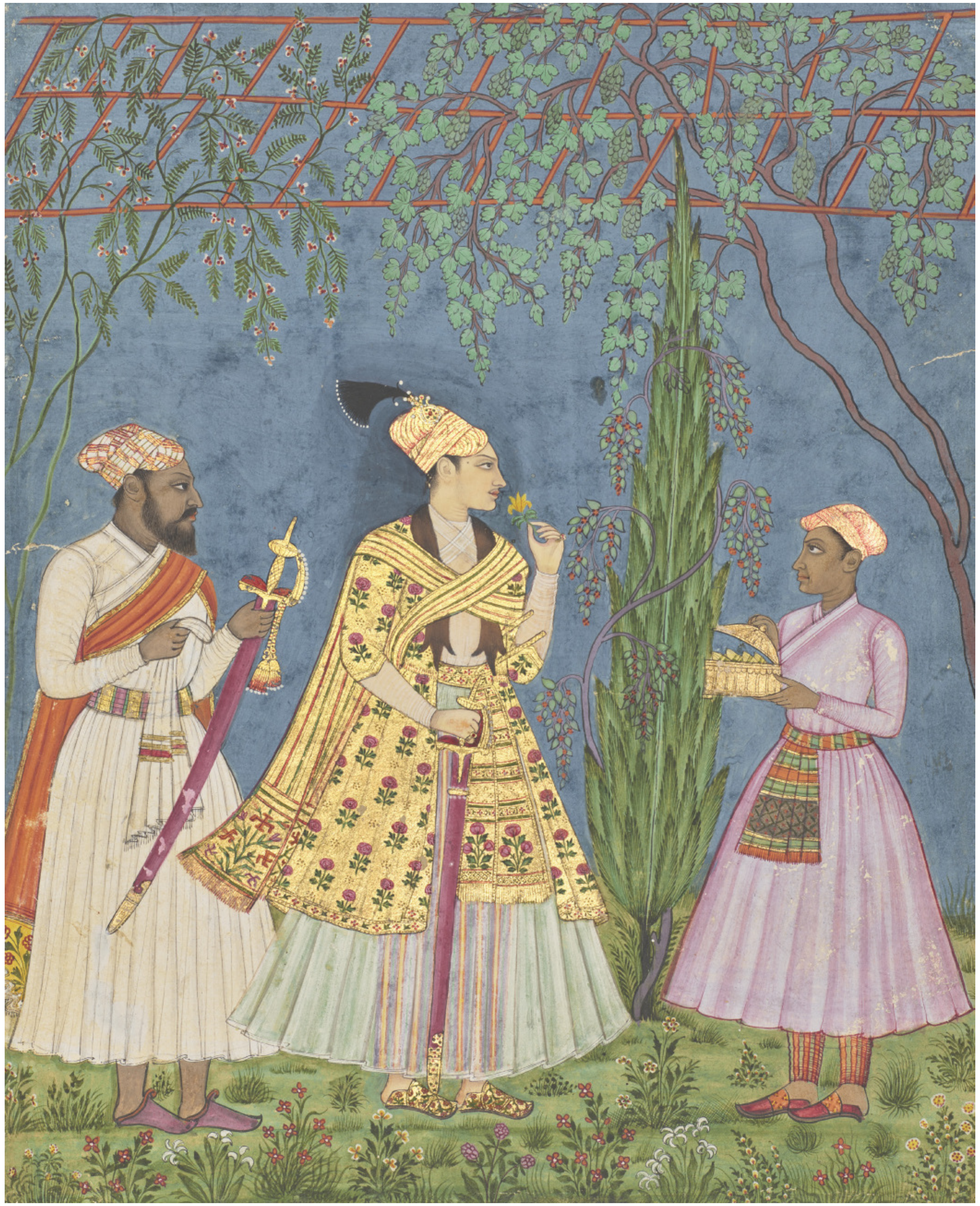
This is a significant portrait of Sultan Abu'l Hasan Qutb Shah of Golconda (r. 1672-1687). In the figures of the sultan, his minister and page, as well as the grassy foreground, the composition accords with the style of Golconda painting at the end of the 17th century. But the arbour above, through which grows a vine and a flowering shrub, is an unusual feature and marks it out as a rare work. It also contains elements of symbolism that may reflect Abu'l Hasan's character and rule.

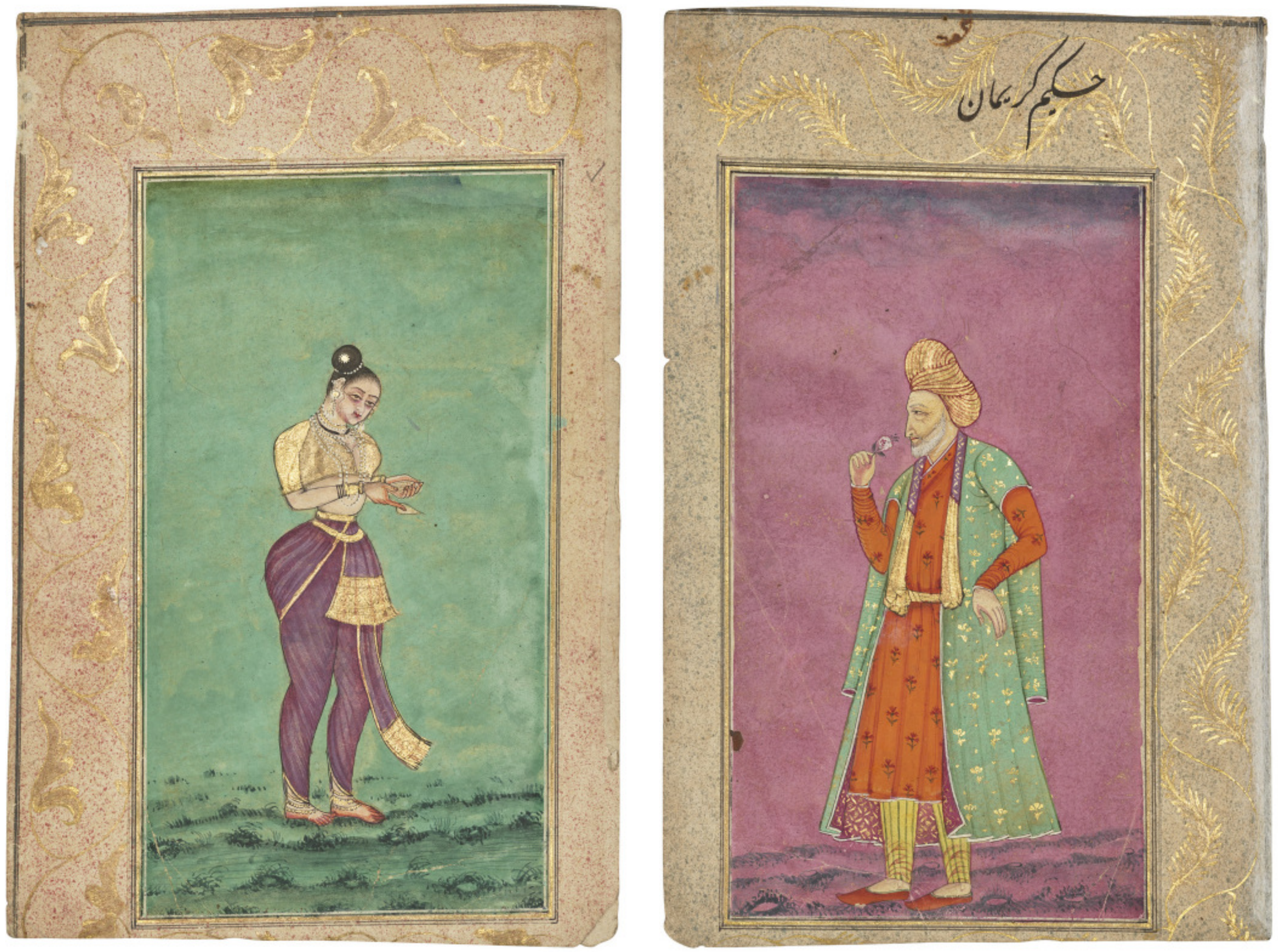
There are several other near contemporary portraits depicting Sultan Abu'l Hasan wearing similar garments and with a similar face to the present portrait, although in those he is bearded and has a slightly fuller and more mature physiognomy. These include examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum (IS.57-1949), the British Museum (1974,0617,0.11.21), the Musée du Louvre, Paris (Inv. MA.12564), the Brooklyn Museum of Art (86.227.50), and the San Diego Museum of Art (1990.491, see Zebrowski 1983, p.190, fig.156). In the Louvre and British Museum examples he wears a gold floral coat with a Persian-style fur collar of very similar design to his coat here, and in the Louvre example he holds a flower in his hand, while in the San Diego example he again wears a similar coat and is also portrayed in the act of smelling a flower. His youthful face in our portrait compared with the others cited above would suggest that the present work is slightly earlier, perhaps produced during the 1670s. Goetz states that the painting was acquired by Maharaja Anup Singh of Bikaner in 1689, providing a *terminus quem* for its production (Goetz 1950, p.177). For a discussion of Golconda painting of the period, see Zebrowski 1983, pp.189-208.

Canby pointed out that, despite the negative propaganda spread by the Mughals, Abu'l Hasan was a cultured, tolerant and far-sighted ruler (Canby 1998, no.119, p.160). He was known as Tana Shah – the "King of Taste". He was a poet and a follower of the spiritual guide Shaykh Raju. He was accepting of the Hindu community in his realm, appointing several Hindus to senior roles at court and forging a treaty with the Maratha leader Shivaji. It was these aspects of his reign, as well as the fact that he and his family were Shi'i, that offended the Mughals and, having long campaigned in the Deccan, Aurangzeb's forces besieged and finally took Golconda in 1687, deposing Abu'l Hasan and imprisoning him. He died in 1699.

The scene contains several potentially symbolic details, such as the sword and *mandil* being held by his minister, symbolising his power authority, the gold box of *paan* being offered to him by his page, which may signal his openness to Hindusim, and the fact that he is smelling a flower, perhaps an indication of his cultural and poetic sensibilities. It is possible that in this portrait of him in his youth he is visually displaying aspects of his personality and approach to rulership.

> "Despite the Mughal historians' attempt to portray Abu'l Hasan as a profligate, morally lax ruler, he was actually an active patron of the arts, interested in Hinduism and tolerant enough to have employed a Hindu as his treasurer"
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**





*33

ALBUM FOLIO WITH PORTRAITS OF A SHAYKH AND A COURTESAN

GOLCONDA, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1675

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within gold and black rules, recto with red margins with gold scrolling foliate motifs, verso with blue margins similarly decorated, upper margin of the verso inscribed in *nasta'liq*, mounted
Paintings 5¾ x 3⅛in. (14.5 x 7.8cm.); folio 7¼ x 4¾in. (18.4 x 12cm.)

£3,000-5,000
US$4,100-6,800
€3,500-5,800

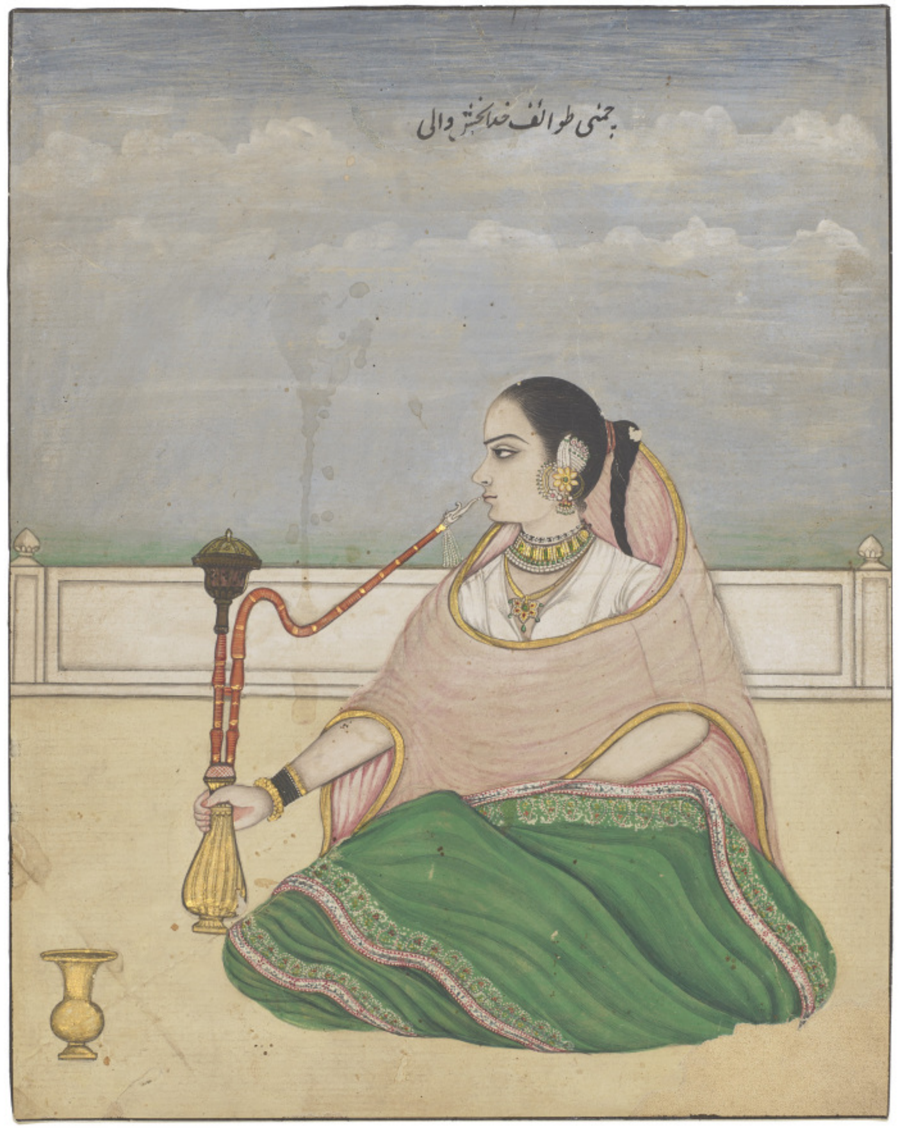
PROVENANCE:
Probably Princess Andrée Aga Khan (1898-1976)

INSCRIPTIONS:
Verso upper margin, *hakim kariman*

In the early 17th century the Dutch Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) began trading with Golconda and established a factory there in 1634. In the following decades increasing numbers of Dutch, and later English, traders and officials travelled to the Deccan and the demand for Indian paintings and works of art to take back to Europe increased. Albums of portraits of important historical figures became a popular product. These albums portrayed Mughal, Golconca, Bijapuri and Maratha grandees as well as figures from Safavid Iran. The present lot was almost certainly from one of these albums created for a European patron. Although it is not entirely clear who the identified portrait of Hakim Kariman is, the turban would suggest he was Safavid.

The production of these portrait albums followed a pattern, as all the known albums today are of a very similar size with near identical portraits of the same cast of characters (two complete albums are in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Manuscrits. Smith-Lesouëf 232 and Smith-Lesouëf 233. Another is in the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett, Ca.112). Whilst the assembly and consumption of albums of royal likenesses had been the preserve of the court up until this point in India, the production of albums for European clients in late 17th century Deccan may be considered a commodification of the genre (Becherini 2018).

Another folio of this type of very similar size with similar margins is in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (IS.48-1969). Like our folio, one side depicts a figure identified in *nasta'liq* above (Bhau Singh, Mughal commander in the Deccan and Raja of Amber, r.1614-1621), and the other a lady against a plain green ground. It is very probably that both our folios and the V&A example are from the same original album. A Deccani album of forty portraits of this type formerly in the collection of the Duc de Luynes was sold by Gros & Delettrez, Paris, 19 December 2024, lot 7.



*34

A YOUNG WOMAN SEATED ON A TERRACE SMOKING A *HUQQA*

DELHI OR LUCKNOW, INDIA, CIRCA 1800

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, inscribed in black *nasta'liq* above, narrow black border, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10⅛ x 8in. (25.6 x 20.2cm.)

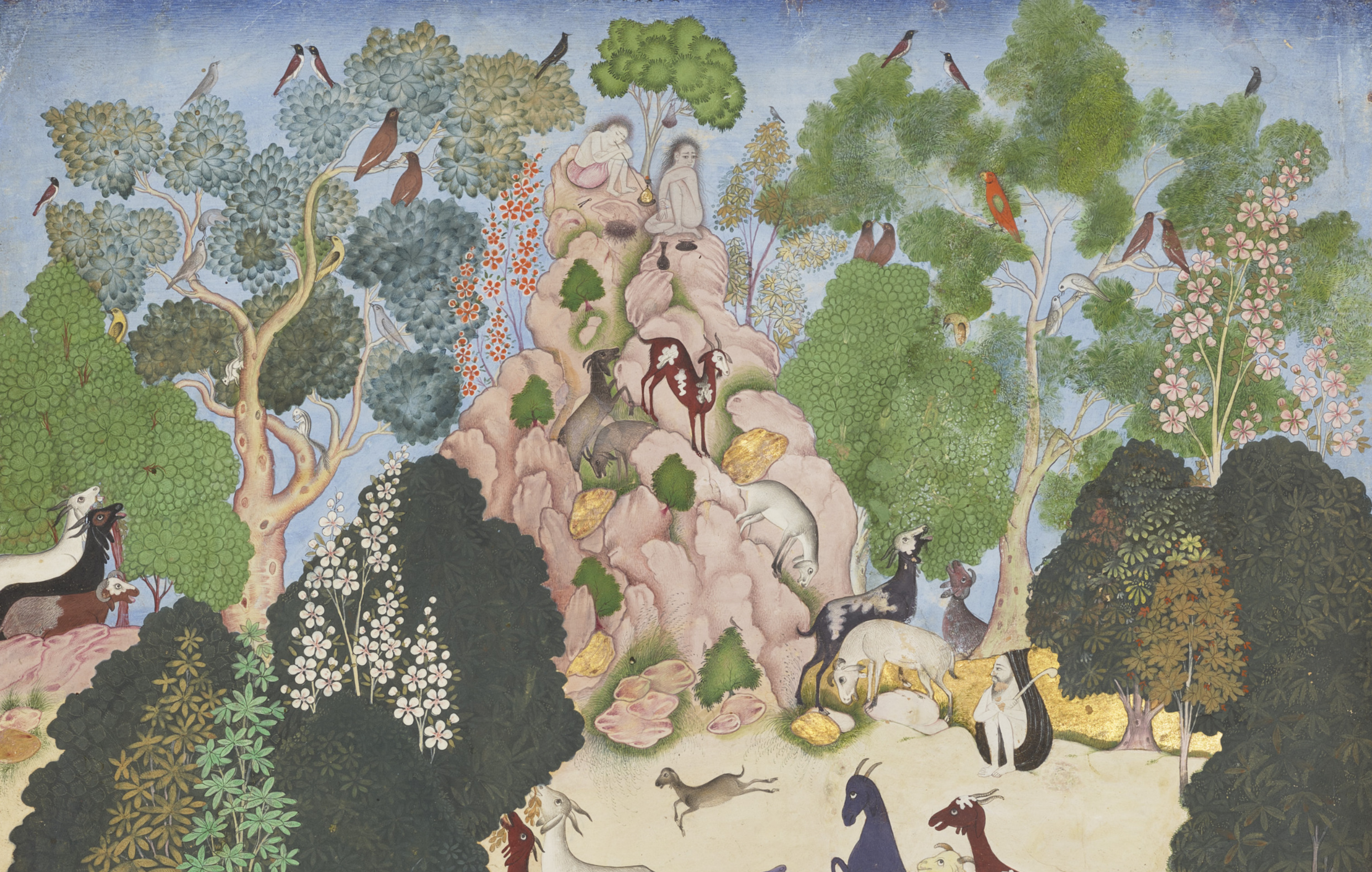
£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

INSCRIPTIONS:
Above the figure, *chamani tawa'if(-i) khuda bakhsh wali,* 'Grass-green(?) dancing girl (of?) Khuda Bakhsh Wali'

This striking painting presents a woman, richly adorned in gold and gem-set jewellery, seated on a terrace and smoking a hookah. She is identified in the description as a 'dancing girl' but here we find her in a moment of calm repose. This creates a certain intimacy to the painting. While we usually see dancing girls depicted in their eponymic roles, the painter grants us a glimpse into her moment of private reprieve. Despite the more private nature of the painting, she is still lavishly adorned with emeralds set into her choker, necklace and *jhumkah*, complementing the green material of her shawl. The inscription reading 'grass-green' is perhaps an allusion to the vibrant colour of her shawl which is decorated with a detailed boteh motif to the hem. Even the hookah she smokes has pearls strung to the mouthpiece and gold inlay to the base and pipe. This is more than just a pastime, it is "artfully designed as a status symbol" (Habighorst 2007, p.44). The enamel work to the top and the gold throughout denotes an elevated status, eschewing more simplistic *huqqas*.

The woman in our painting shares similar facial features with the dancing girls in the British Library collection (acc.no.Add.Or.1 and Add. Or.2). The women have pale features, their hair is pulled back in a tight hairstyle and they have sharply delineated profiles. These two large scale portraits are dated circa 1820, located in Delhi and its environs. Our portrait allows us to focus on just one of the dancing girls in further detail.



*35

ANIMALS AND ASCETICS IN A LANDSCAPE

GOLCONDA, DECCAN, INDIA, CIRCA 1690

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, laid down within gold rules, on broad red margins with black and gold outer rules, *devanagari* inscription to upper margin, reverse plain with English annotation
Painting 14¾in. x 9⅝in. (37.4 x 24.5cm.); folio 17 x 11⅜in. (43.1 x 28.9cm.)

£200,000-300,000
US$280,000-410,000
€240,000-350,000

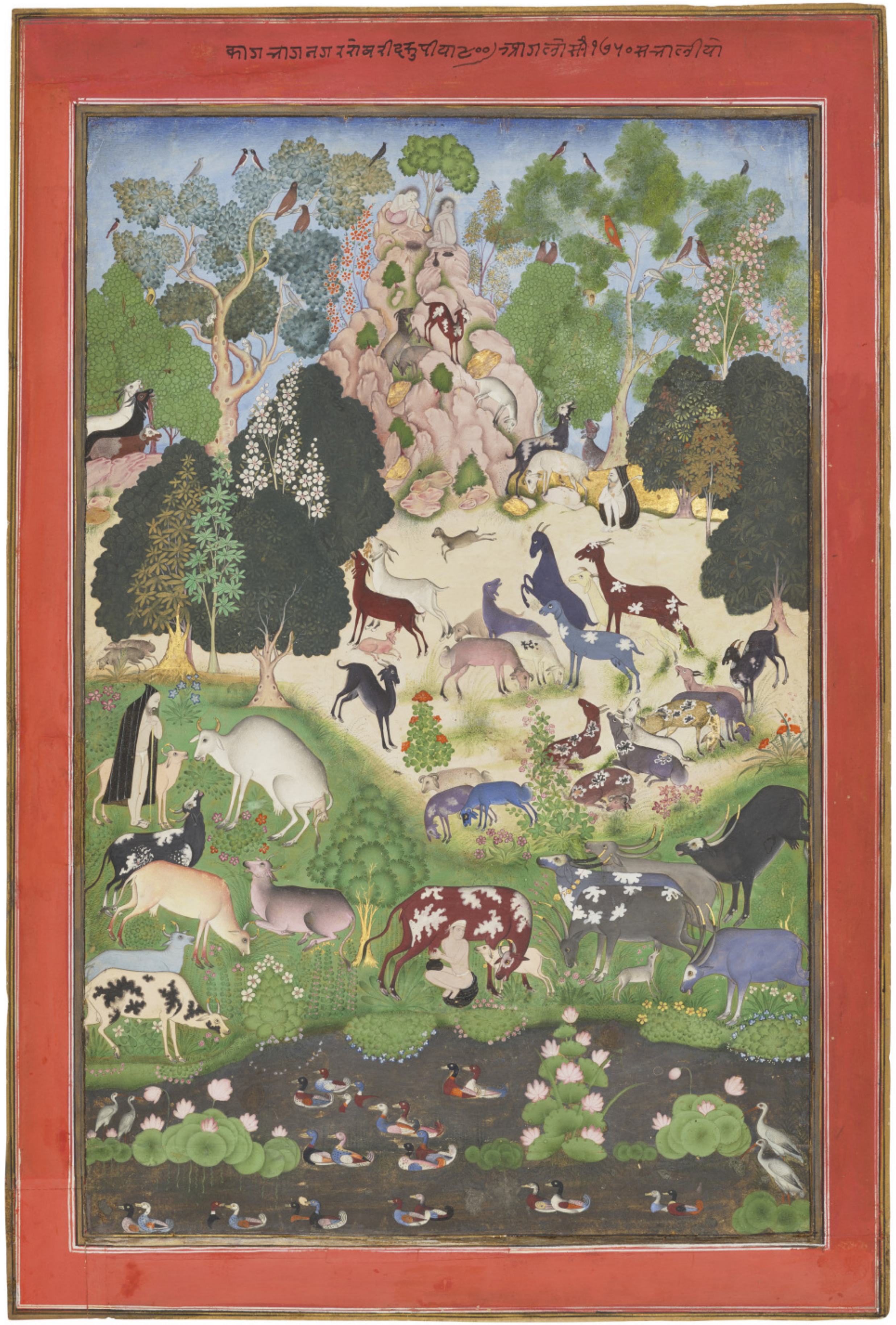
PROVENANCE:
Edwin Montagu (1879-1924), British Secretary of State for India, 1917-1922
G.W. Gemmel, Suffolk, England
Spink and Son Ltd, London, 1982

EXHIBITED:
Two Thousand Years of Indian Art, Spink & Son, London, 1982
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
W.G. Archer, *Indian Miniatures*, London, 1960, no. 31
Spink and Son, *Two Thousand Years of Indian Art*, London, 1982, no.93, p.20
M. Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting,* London, 1983, fig.180, p.207
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.118, pp.159-160
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients,* Zurich, 1998, no.23, pp.76-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.118, pp.159-160

INSCRIPTIONS:
In the upper border, "Bought at Bhagnagar purchase price 800 rupees checked today in Samvat 1750 (1693-4 AD)"

> "The vignette of a cow giving birth, observed benignly by one of the men, draws the viewer's attention as a unique event in the composition, and probably refers in a general way to the regeneration of the natural world"
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**



This idyllic pastoral scene is an outstanding example of Deccani painting. Striking in its originality, exquisite in its details and of unusually large size, it combines masterful technique with a charmed sense of reality to produce a highly memorable image of an enchanted landscape, an Arcadia-like realm of rural idyll and mystical contemplation. Although crowded with animals, birds and vegetation, it nevertheless conveys a sense of great tranquillity. W. G. Archer described it as "an ecstatic celebration of nature herself" (Archer 1960, pl.31), and Sheila Canby described it as "the evocation of an ideal world in which man and nature are at peace." (Canby 1998, p.160).

Reflecting the eclectic social and cultural blend of the Deccani states, as well as the poetic sensitivities of the sultans, artists at the courts of Golconda, Bijapur and Ahmadnagar fused local pictorial traditions with those from Mughal and other Indian schools, as well as from Central Asia, Persia and Turkey, and infused them with a powerful, almost otherworldly sense of lyricism and allegory to create distinctive and highly alluring compositions. Mark Zebrowski commented that "a surprisingly large proportion of the surviving masterpieces of Indian painting was produced for the mysterious sultans who ruled the Deccan" (Zebrowski 1983, p.7), while Navina Najat Haidar described Deccani art as poetic in character, with a sense of fantasy, lyrical movement of line, glowing colours, enigmatic shifts of scale, and a seductive emphasis on mood, and yet maintaining a rigor and mastery over formal idioms that leads to the creation of distinctive, exciting stylistic expressions of intellectual depth and profundity (Haidar in Haidar and Sardar 2015, pp.15-16, 19). The present painting has all of these qualities.

THE PAINTING

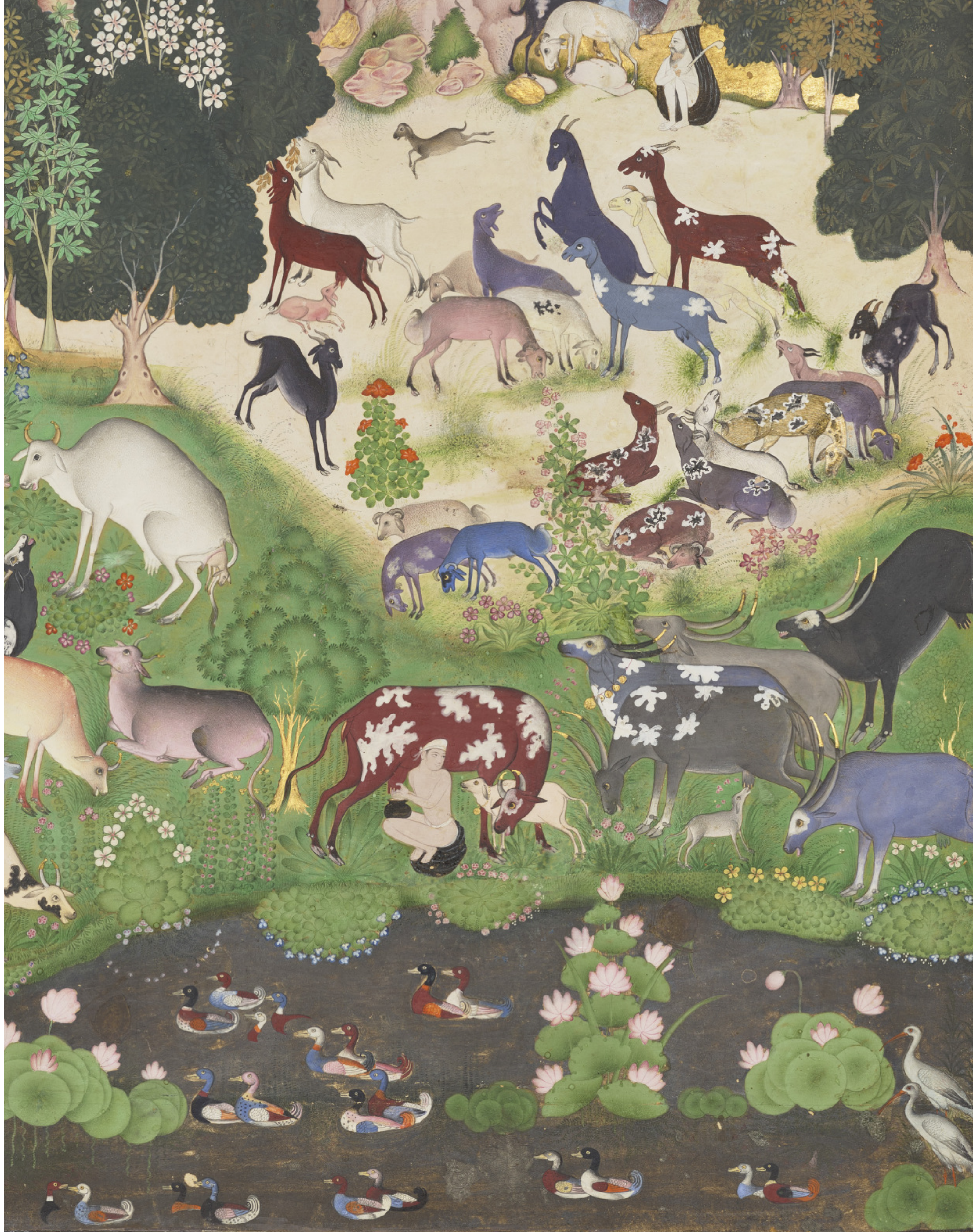
On the verdant grassy bank of a pond, a large herd of long- and short-horned cattle graze contentedly, watched over by two herdsmen, one kneeling in the centre milking a cow, the other standing at left wearing a black hooded cloak and resting on a staff in front of a cow giving birth to a calf – a remarkable and eye-catching vignette. All the cows have gold tips to their horns, marking this herd out as special, possibly sacred, hinting at spiritual and mystical aspects in the scene. Gold highlights are also used for the trunks of the trees next to the milking cow and above the birthing cow, as well as in the rocks around the shepherd at upper right. Growing in the pond are colourful lotus plants and numerous, dark, fern-like water plants, which are almost invisible unless observed closely. Two pairs of red-billed egrets stand at either side of the pond, and between them are twelve pairs of ducks. Barely visible against the dark-grey of the water are two oversized butterflies alighting on the lotus flowers. This type of unexpected shift of scale is a leitmotif of many Deccani paintings (see Haidar 2016 for an essay on this subject, including a very similar oversized butterfly, fig.4, p.23). Further up the slope on the drier ground, sheep and goats graze on sparse tufts of grass, while some of the goats reach up to chew on the leaves of the large trees. A third herdsman, wrapped in a cloak, sits peacefully on the ground at the foot of the rocky outcrop A few adventurous goats are exploring the rocks above, at the top of which sit two ascetics, one inhaling, eyes closed, on a *huqqa* pipe, the other gazing down on the scene below. In the trees at the upper level are numerous birds, either singles or in pairs, and a pair of striped squirrels. Far off in the sky is a flight of five birds, their tiny size indicating their distance.

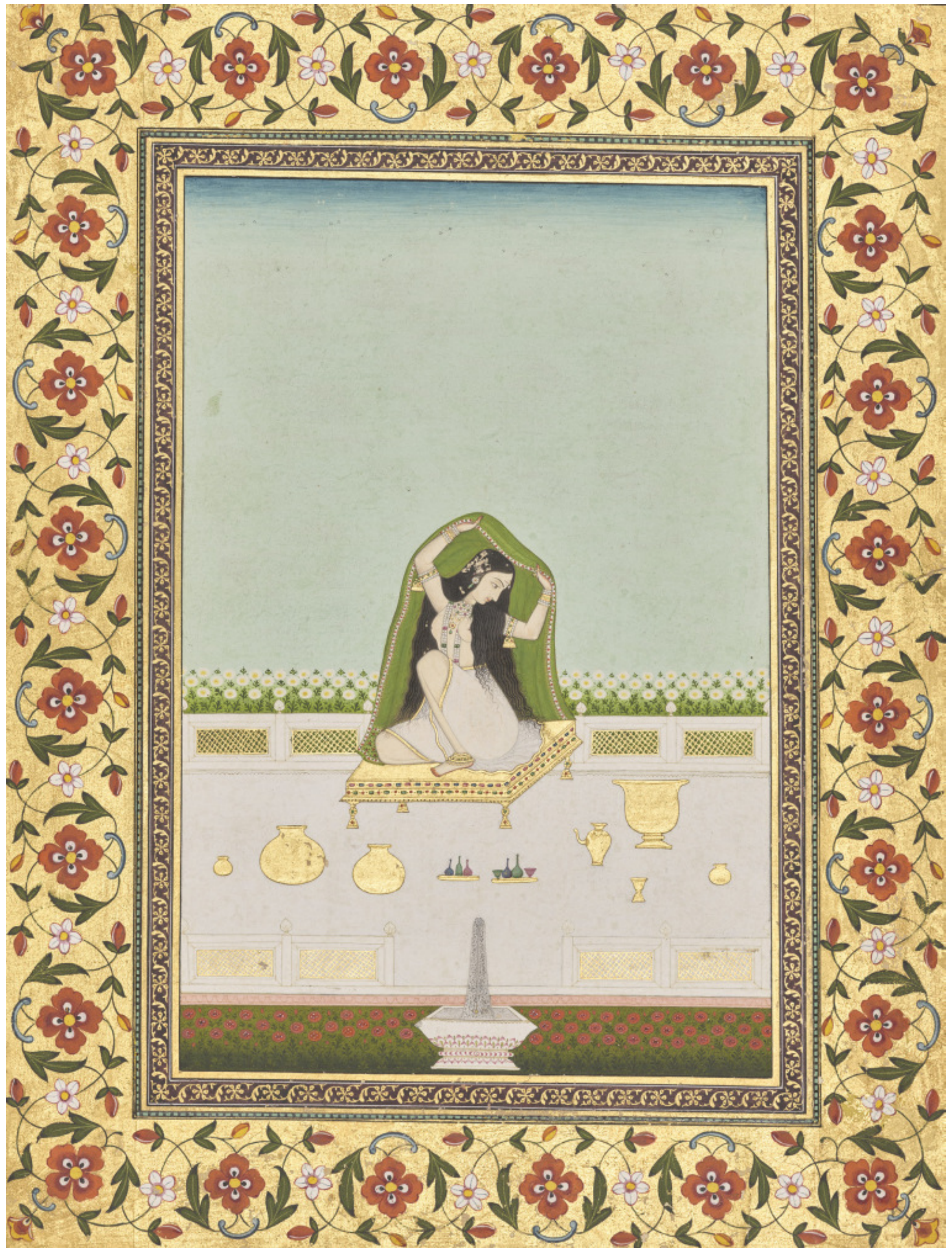
It is a mesmerising scene, with a superbly balanced composition, a strong but harmonious palette and numerous charming details and vignettes. In addition to the strong sense of lyricism and enchantment, there is a degree of realism in the artist's depiction of how animals behave and interact with humans. The brown cow being milked at centre is turning towards the herdsman, mouth open in noisy protest, perhaps at the fact that her calf, who stands lowing in hunger, is temporarily being denied its sustenance. The look on the herdsman's face as he turns towards the cow seems to suggest understanding and a silent apology. The second herdsman stands watching the cow giving birth, and the slight frown lines on his forehead and pinched eyebrows imply that, although he is patiently letting nature takes its course, he is nevertheless slightly anxious and concerned for the labouring animal. The partially bent hind legs of the cow is another small naturalistic detail.

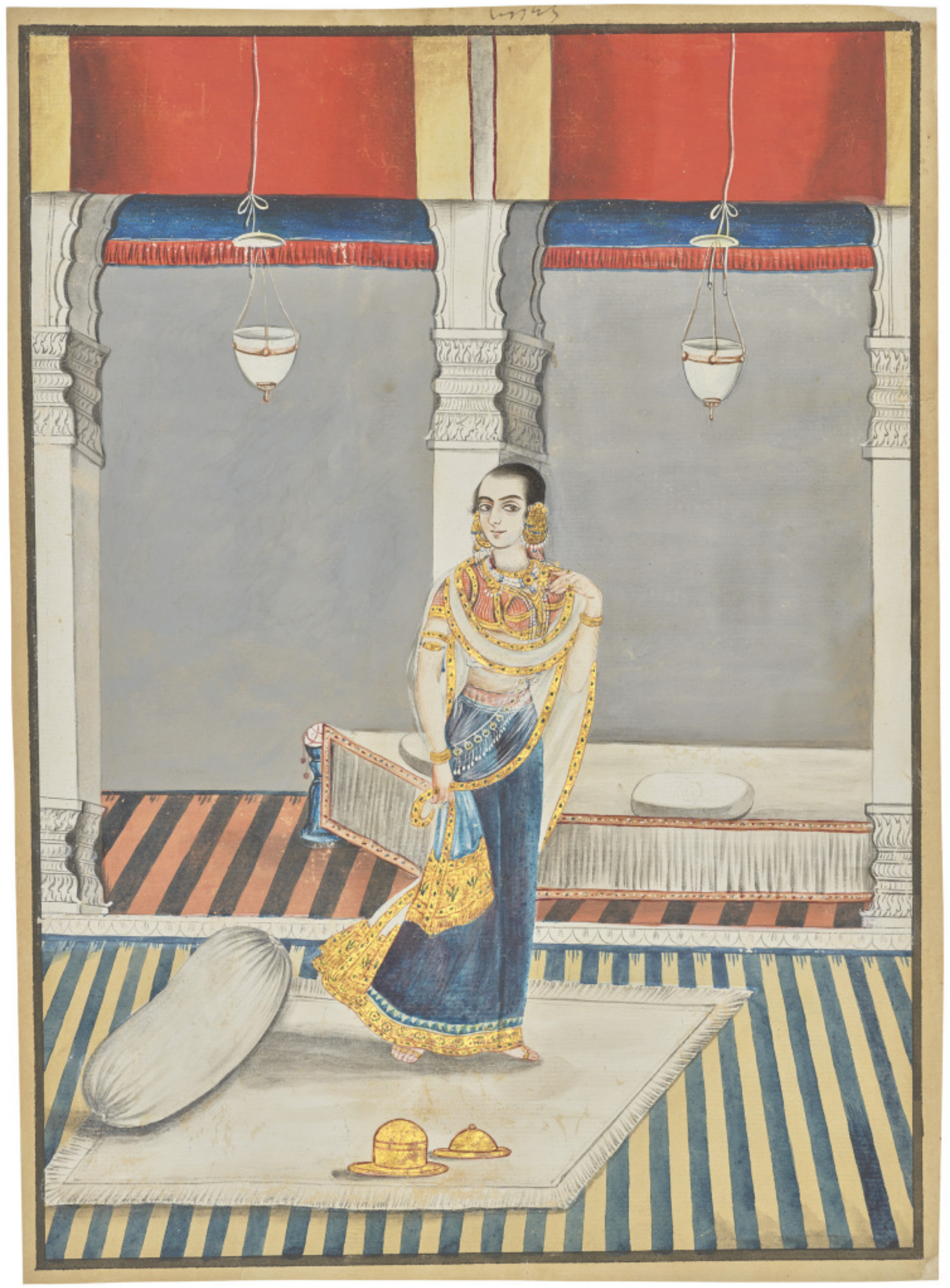
Archer stated that "The forest life, a regimen prescribed for certain kinds of ascetics, may well be its underlying theme, but the plethora of animals, the cattle marked as if for an autumn saturnalia, their varied stances and joyous motions, make it an ecstatic celebration of nature herself" (Archer 1960, pl.31). The theme of fertility is reinforced in several ways. It is noticeable that almost all the birds and wild animals are pictured as pairs – pairs of ducks and egrets in the pond, pairs of squirrels at upper left, and multiple pairs of birds in the upper trees. The inclusion of pairs of animals or birds was a visual trope in Indian painting (and other traditions) generally symbolising fertility and fidelity, and the artist's decision here to include so many pairs reinforces the idea of natural fecundity that is directly expressed in the vignette of the cow giving birth.

There may also be symbolism embedded in the landscape and composition. In the lower part of the picture the scene seems to represent the material world and the earthly realm, with animals and birds feeding and giving birth, and the humans engaged in the practical duties of herdsmen. Higher up the composition, the theme and the landscape itself become more ascetic, moving from the lush, watery foreground up to the more arid rocky outcrop where the two holy men sit in meditative contemplation. Their stony hill offers little in the way of food, and it is as if they are sustained by inner spiritual nourishment. The only thing above them is a slim strip of sky with a distant flight of birds. They are close to the heavens physically and spiritually.

The near-contemporary inscription in the upper border (see above) is similar to a formula used by palace librarians at Bikaner and it is possible that this painting may once have formed part of the Bikaner palace collection (Archer 1960, pl.31). On the verso is an inscription in black ink in an early 20th century, English hand reading "1000£ Goats and Cattle on the Hill Side Very Old No. 48".







***36**

A YOUNG WOMAN ON A TERRACE

AWADH OR BENGAL, INDIA, CIRCA 1800

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down between navy blue borders decorated with gold floral illumination and gold stripes, laid down on gold margins with red and white flowers in a scrolling leafy vine, red outer borders, reverse plain with old inventory stamp, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7⅞ x 5¼in. (20 x 13.3cm.); folio 11⅝ x 8¾in. (29.5 x 22.3cm.)

£8,000-12,000
US$11,000-16,000
€9,300-14,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's New York, *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*, 21 March 2001, lot 202

This painting of a maiden attending to her toilette on a terrace is an elegant example of a subject that was popular among Indian and European patrons and collectors in the late 18th and early 19th century. At one level it is a purely decorative painting of a beautiful maiden in the act of bathing, but there are aspects of the iconography that relate to Indian traditions of aesthetics and musical modes. The bathing and adornment of a young woman (note the rich jewellery here) has resonances in the *nayika* tradition and references *Alamkara* and *Sringar*a. In addition, the pose matches the pictorial representation of the *Ragamala* mode *Desvarati Ragini* in which the arms raised over the head are the iconographic clue (see Ebeling 1973, C31, pp.86-7 and as indexed).

***37**

A YOUNG WOMAN STANDING ON A CARPETED TERRACE

LUCKNOW, INDIA, CIRCA 1830-40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on watermarked paper, within narrow black borders, reverse plain, framed and glazed
12⅞ x 9⅛in. (32.7 x 23.2cm.); 13½ x 9¾in. (34.2 x 24.6cm.)

£2,500-3,500
US$3,400-4,800
€2,900-4,000

PROVENANCE:
Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd, London, 1978

This painting of a courtesan in an interior is typical of Lucknow style and subject matter of the second quarter of the 19th century. Her garments are elegant and she wears rich jewellery. She stands in an graceful pose and looks directly and confidently at the viewer with large eyes. The boldly striped dhurries, gold vessels in the foreground, hanging lamps and red and blue awnings add to the sense of relative affluence. For illustrations and discussions of related figures see Patnaik 1985, pp.73-6; Losty 2010, cats.71-2, 74, pp.160-2, 202-03.

*38

BATTLE OF THE KITES

STYLE OF MUHAMMAD FAQIRULLAH KHAN, FARRUKHABAD, MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1760-70

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down between gold-sprinkled blue paper borders, gold, blue and black rules, gold-sprinkled margins, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 11⅞ x 8⅝in. (30.2 x 22cm.); folio 14½ x 12⅞in. (36.8 x 32.8cm.)

£15,000-25,000
US$21,000-34,000
€18,000-29,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's London, *Important Islamic and Indian Manuscripts and Miniatures,*
13 October 1982, lot 46
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1983

This lively, convivial scene of noblewomen enjoying a kite battle on a terrace against a glowing evening sky is a highly accomplished example of the Farrukhabad style of the third quarter of the 18th century.

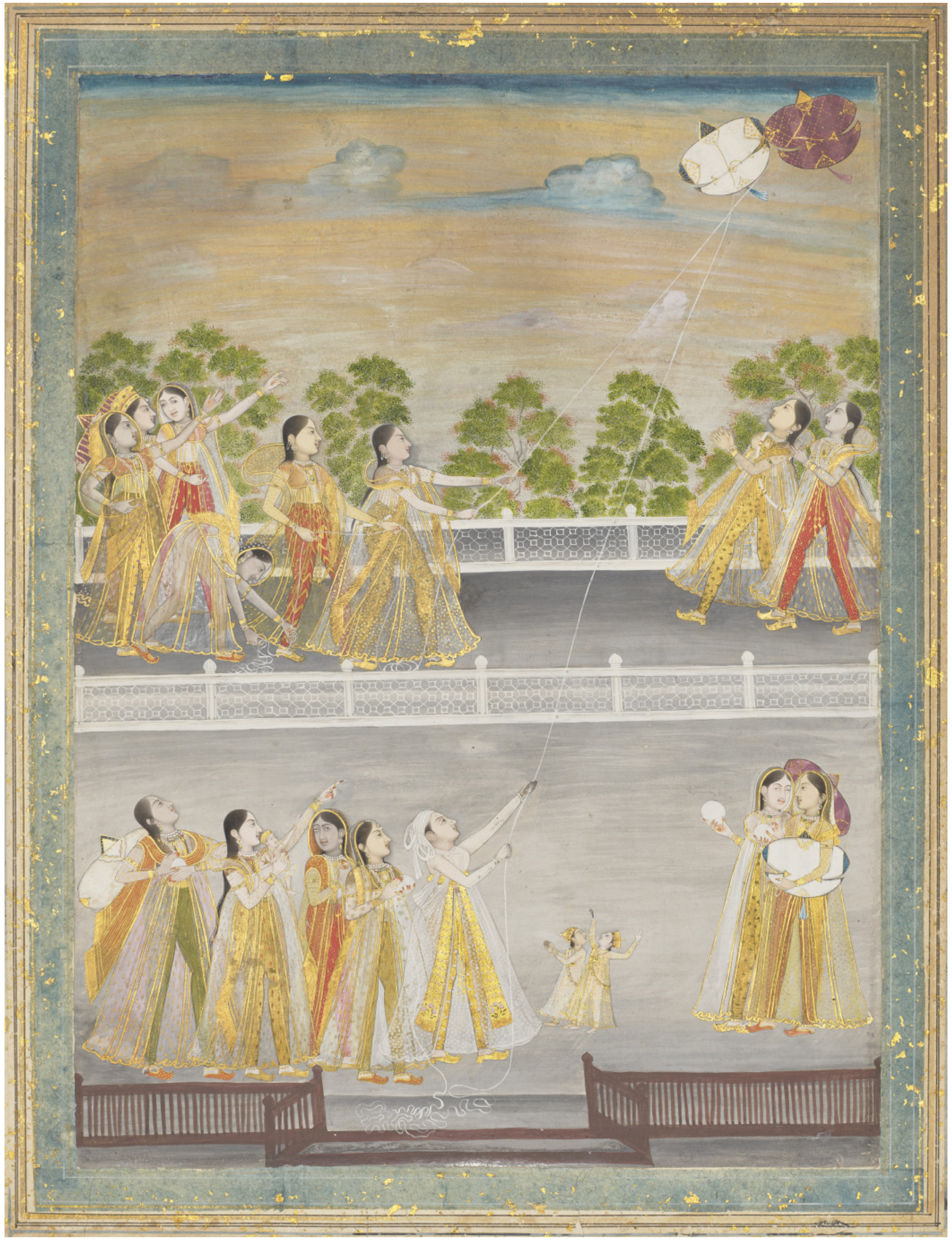
A variety of entertainments were enjoyed by women in the seclusion of the *zenana*, and many were portrayed in paintings. One of these pastimes was flying kites (*patang*), which was popular among the Mughal nobility, especially in the 18th century. According to Abdul Halim Sharar, Shah Alam I (1707-1712) greatly boosted its popularity in courtly circles, and a tradition attributed to Nawab Asaf al-Dawla (r. 1775-1797) involved stitching fringes of gold and silver coins to the kites, and whoever retrieved one of the nawab's lost kites was rewarded with the coins. There were terms for different types of kites – *patang*, *tukkal*, *guddi* and *chang*, and the relative strengths of these different designs was fiercely contested. It remained a popular pastime into the 19th century and later blended with the celebration of popular festivals. For additional information on kite flying in India see Sharar 1975, pp.129-31; Desai 2010, pp.1-24, where further illustrations can also be found.

The scene is skilfully portrayed, with a palpable sense of excitement and enjoyment clearly conveyed through the animated movements of the women, children and infant, some clapping, some pointing up at the kites in the sky, and one bending down to untangle a string on the ground. On the lower level, two teams wait their turn, one holding her kite in her arms, the other over her shoulder. The rich and brightly coloured garments and diaphanous gilt-edged robes stand out in elegant contrast against the grey terrace, and the rich jewellery worn by the women is depicted in great detail. Only the upper parts of the trees beyond the terrace are visible, the rest is sky. This conveys the sense that the activity is taking place on the roof of a building, a feature that reflects historical reality (see Lal in Quintanilla et al. 2017, pp.294-5).

The palette, figure type and the distinctive flat-cheeked smooth faces with aquiline nose are all very similar to other Farrukhabad works of the period, such as examples in the British Library (IOL, Johnson Album 66, nos.4-9, see Falk ad Archer 1981, nos.362 i-vi, pp.190, 469, pl.11), the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (73.4, see Leach 1995, vol.2, p.706); the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2001.421, see Topsfield 2004, no.151, pp.342-43), the Cleveland Museum of Art (2013.341 and 2013.342, see Quintanilla et al, nos.82 and 83, pp.178, 262); the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (M.2005.159 and M.87.278.9, see Markel and Gude 2010, p.73), and the San Diego Museum of Art (Binney Collection, 1990.422 and 1990.425, see Binney 1973, pp.120, 124, 128, figs.99, 105). Further related examples have been sold in these rooms, 12 June 2014, lot 26, and at Bonhams, London, 21 April 2015, lot 200. A later Farrukhabad version of the present composition, in mirror-image, was exhibited by Francesca Galloway Ltd, London, 2008.

The style has been associated with the artist Muhammad Faqirullah Khan, who was based at nearby Lucknow and whose style was closely followed in Farrukhabad. Of the comparable examples in museums cited above, several, including those in the British Library, one of the examples in LACMA and one of the examples in San Diego, have inner blue and outer gold-flecked borders extremely similar to those of the present painting. Although this was a popular design for albums of the period, the concurrence is notable.

The city of Farrukhabad was founded in 1714 by the Muhammad Khan Bangash (1665-1743), a powerful Mughal commander and governor, and named in honour of his patron and reigning Mughal emperor of the time, Farrukhsiyar (r. 1713-19). Under the rule of Ahmad Khan Bangash (r. 1750-1771), it became a prosperous regional centre with strong local cultural patronage, influenced by and competing with the larger city of Lucknow nearby (Markel and Gude 2010, p.72; Bazmee Ansari 1991).



***39**

PRINCE MIRZA BABUR (1796-1835)

DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1830

Opaque and transluscent pigments heightened with gold on card, reverse plain, framed and glazed
18⅝ x 14⅛in. (47.4 x 35.8cm.)

£40,000-60,000
US$55,000-82,000
€47,000-69,000

PROVENANCE:

Eyre and Hobhouse, Ltd, London, circa 1980

The subject of this painting is Prince Mirza Babur (1796 – 13 February 1835), son of Mughal emperor Akbar II. Portraits of Prince Mirza in adulthood are very rare, perhaps because he died at a relatively early age. The more common depictions of him are as a child where he appears in several large Durbar scenes with his father, Akbar II, and his three brothers.

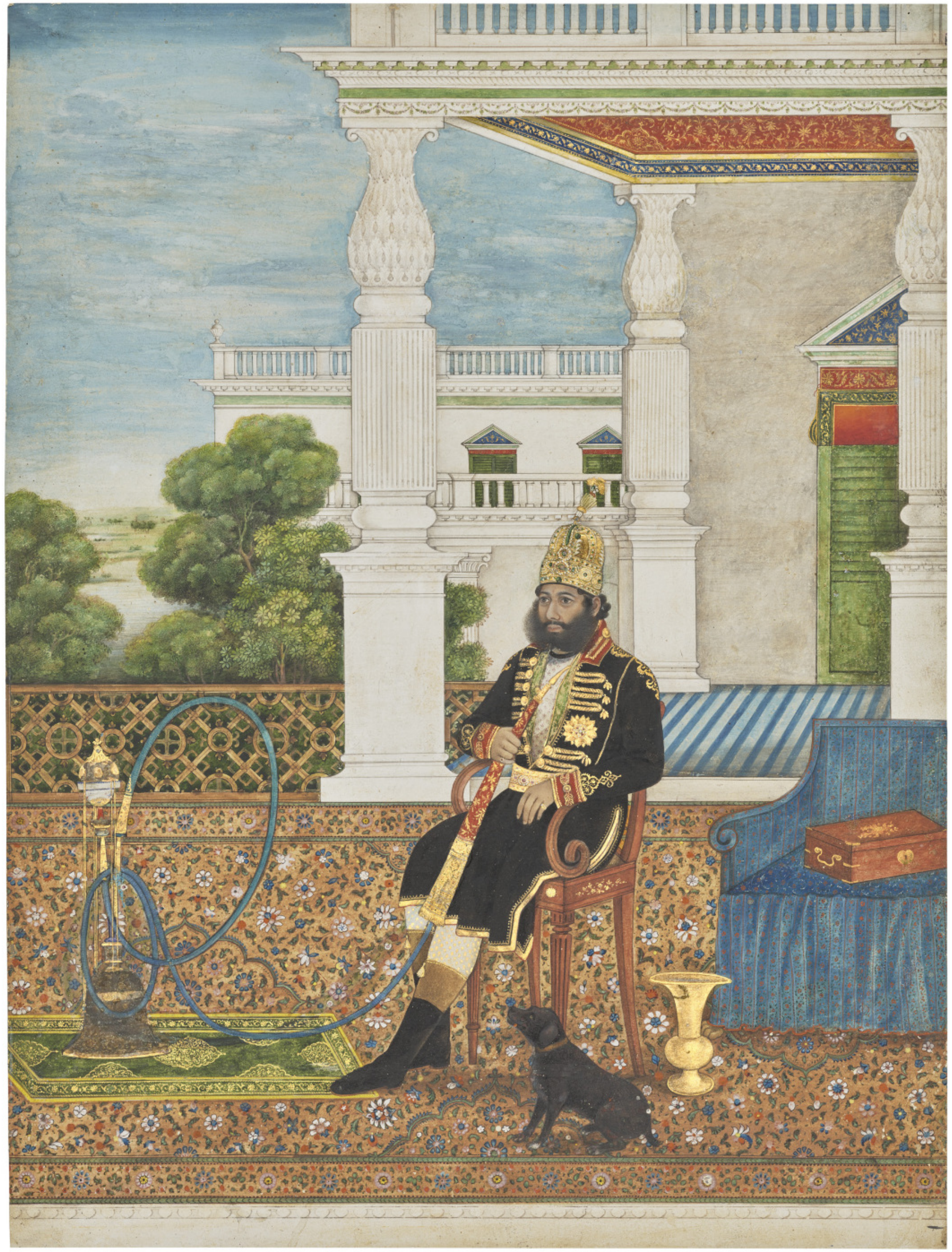
There are three Durbar scenes where Prince Mirza can be identified. The first is in the Cincinnati Art Museum (acc.no.1962.458) where he is on the far right of the four sons, dated 1811-1815. There is another in the British Library (acc.no.Add.Or.342), dated circa 1815. The latest Durbar scene is dated circa 1820, meaning that Prince Mirza was twenty-four when the painting was completed, this is in the British Library (acc. no.Add.Or.3079).

Our painting, however, is perhaps unique for its depiction of the adult Prince Mirza as the main subject, without his family, and presents us with a rare insight into him as a character. It is immediately striking that the Prince has chosen to be painted wearing a typically European style coat. Further corroborating this, a Major Archer, an eye-witness who was serving as aid-de-camp to Lord Combermere (1773-1865), recorded that "[the Prince] wears an European-cut coat, with stars on both breasts,: top boots and a thick walking stick" (Archer 1833, p.383). The description of the Prince that Archer offers tallies closely with that in the painting.

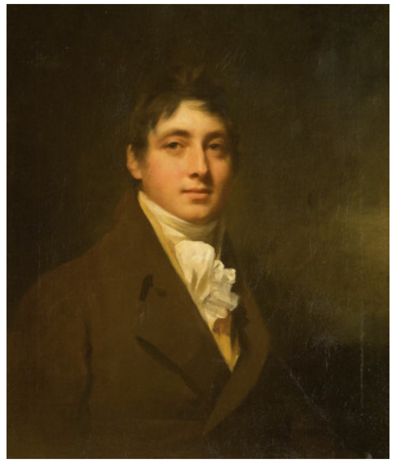
Indeed, it seems that the Prince adopted more Western habits than the rest of his brothers. Spear writes that he "affected European manners [and] built a European-style house whose Corinthian columns and stucco walls horrified admirers of Shah Jahan's architecture" (Spear 1951). These very same Corinthian columns and capitals can be seen in our painting providing us with a setting for the painting. Given the disdain with which the rest of his family seemed to regard the Greek architecture, we can be confident that the subject is situated in his house in this portrait. Further European details are scattered throughout the painting, the furniture, for example, has notable Western influence. Even the style of receding the landscape in the background is reflective of Western watercolour technique.

We are offered a further glimpse into Prince Mirza's character through another known painting which relates to him. A folio from the Fraser Album of *The Bullock-Drawn Carriage of Prince Mirza Babur* is currently in the Islamic Arts Museum, Malaysia (acc.no.MY140). While this painting shows the carriage being led by two bullocks, Archer reports that the young Prince could often be seen in a "coach-and-six" and that this very "carriage, horses, and all, are often seen in a ditch" (Archer 1833, p.383). Clearly, the Prince had a propensity for riding in a carriage, albeit somewhat recklessly. This further illustrates his character as someone who enjoyed using his wealth to engage in more European-style behaviours.

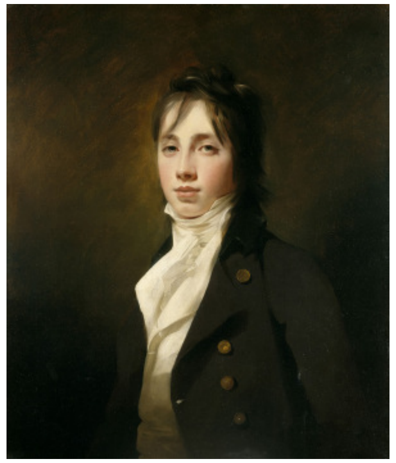
The Indian nature of the portrait should not be disregarded. The fine details in the flowered carpet and rug coupled with the intricacy of the Prince's clothes and jewels are clearly the work of a skilled painter. The inclusion of the Prince's dog is another detail which provides us with an insight into his character, perhaps suggesting an affection for this pet. This is again a European import, dogs in Islam were traditionally considered unclean and not to be treated as pets. This particular dog seems of a similar breed to a later company school painting in The Cleveland Museum of Art (acc.no.2005.74). The *huqqa* places a traditional Indian pastime at the forefront of the painting and, despite his affection for Europeanisms, his status as a prince of a Mughal emperor should not be forgotten. The painting is full of opulence, the Prince wears his jewel encrusted crown, surrounded by gold inlaid objects and furniture. The wealth of the Mughal Prince is not to be understated.



EIGHT HIGHLY IMPORTANT PAGES FROM THE FRASER ALBUM



James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856) by Sir Henry Raeburn, 1809



William Fraser of Reelig (1784–1835) by Sir Henry Raeburn, 1801, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1975.1.234

The following eight paintings are among the finest from the celebrated Fraser Album—an extraordinary series of paintings that stand as one of the finest and most important visual records of life in early 19th century India. Commissioned by William Fraser (1784-1835) and his brother James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856), the paintings are an unmatched record of the social, cultural and everyday life of Delhi's rural and urban residents as well as a testament to the phenomenal artistic skills of the painters who produced them. The lots offered here exemplify the very best of the series - rich in detail, character and atmosphere, and with mesmerizingly haunting portraiture, they capture the essence of the Fraser Album.

The Fraser Album was a remarkable project initiated by William Fraser and his brother James Baillie Fraser, Scotsmen who served in India. William Fraser, the younger son of Edward Fraser of Reelig, Inverness, arrived in India in 1801 and rose through the ranks of the East India Company's political service. His deep engagement with local communities and landscapes, especially around Delhi and Garhwal, exposed him to a wide cross-section of society. In 1814, his brother James joined him in India as a merchant in Calcutta. The brothers travelled through the Himalayas and on that trip, James Fraser, himself an accomplished amateur artist, began to record the landscapes, monuments and people he encountered in drawings and paintings, which are reflected in his diary entries. In their attempts to record all that they saw, William also hired local artists to "take the likenesses of several of the servants and the Ghorkas" (Archer and Falk 1989, p.45). Returning to Delhi in August 1815 the brothers encouraged further artists to record Mughal court dancers and singers, and later many other characters, beginning the five-year project which became 'The Fraser Album'.

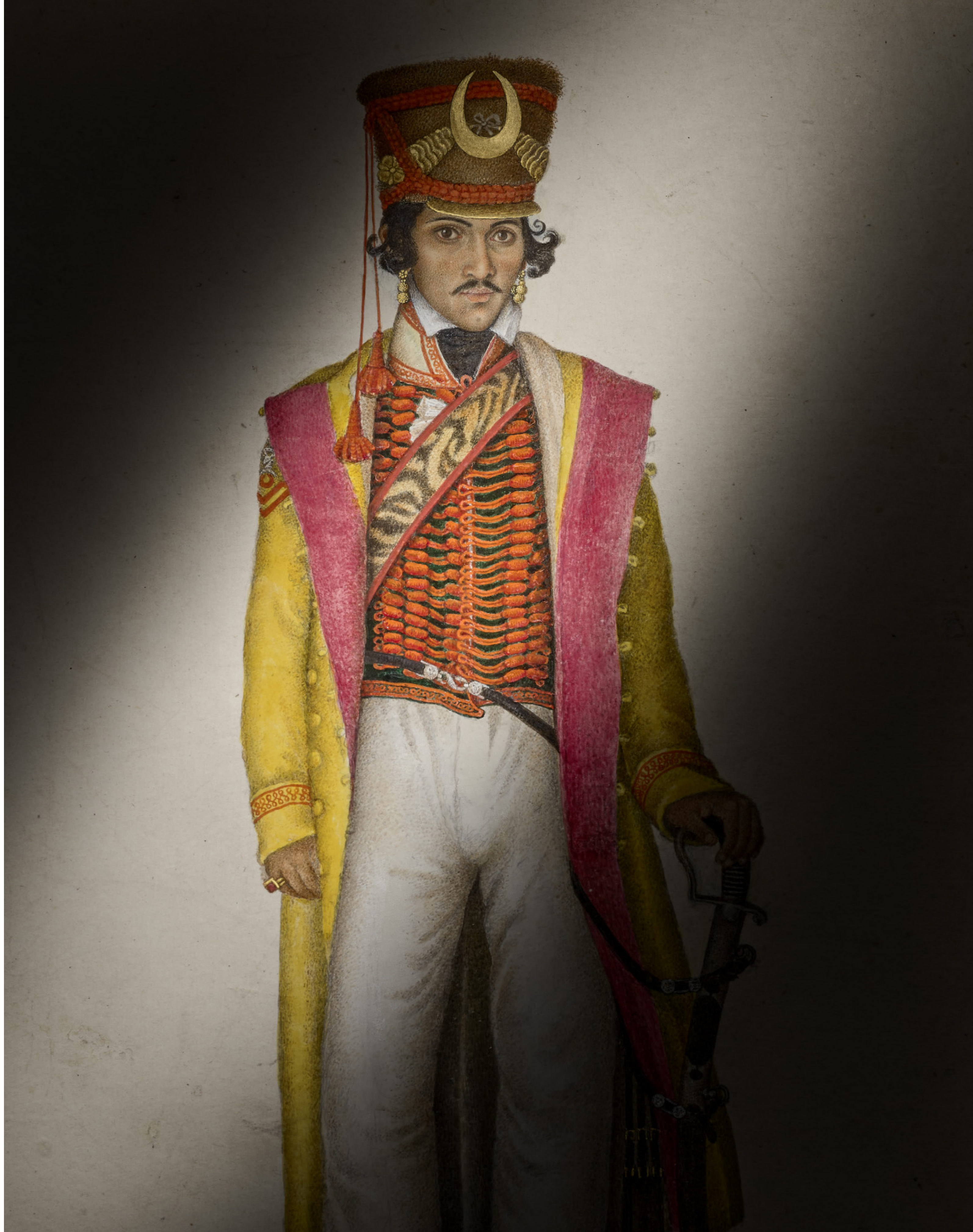
To the Europeans who travelled to India from the mid-18th century, the country offered a new and exotic culture, landscape, art and civilisation that to them were unexplored and unrecorded. The Fraser brothers were not alone in their desire to document the world around them in an almost encyclopaedic manner. Those who arrived in India were interested in making accurate records, with the further possibility of publishing books with colour plates based on Indian drawings (Archer and Falk 1989 p.44). The earliest significant group of such drawings was the natural history series commissioned by Lady Mary Impey, wife of Sir Elijah, the Chief Justice of Bengal (1774-82). Other patrons included Francis Rawdon-Hastings, The Marquess of Hastings, who employed the artist Sita Ram to document his 1814-15 journey through India which he did in a series of over 200 topographical paintings or Sophia Elizabeth Plowden, wife of East India Company officer Richard Chicheley Plowden, who worked on an album in which she sought to record North Indian song lyrics and tunes (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge MS 380).

The Fraser brothers' initial commissions included portraits of *nautch* dancers seen at social gatherings (see lots 42, 44 and 45 in this sale), but soon encompassed a wide variety of characters with whom William came into contact in his political, business and social affairs, including soldiers, merchants, tribesmen, villagers, local dignitaries, holy men and many more. While James returned to Calcutta in 1816 and later to Scotland in 1820, William continued to commission works over the next several years. Tragically, his career was cut short when he was assassinated in 1835 by agents of the Nawab Shams al-Din of Firozpur. He was buried at St. James's Church in Delhi, where his tomb, paid for by his friend Colonel James Skinner, still stands today.

Most of the Fraser Album watercolours are attributed to a master artist from the circle of Ghulam Ali Khan, with select works attributed directly to Ghulam Ali Khan himself. For more information on Ghulam Ali Khan, see lot 59 in the present sale. Others, such as some of the *nautch* dancers are attributed to Lalji or Hulas Lal (see, for instance, lot 42 in the present sale). These artists were familiar with the art of portraiture from their own tradition but were suddenly alive to the expectations of the European patrons. The resulting portraits–some recording single figures and others well-knit groups, be they performers, soldiers or horse merchants - are alive with psychological intensity and immediacy. As Goswamy writes "well ahead of the coming of the camera, these portraits come as close as possible to "telling it as it is": honest and evocative, and in many cases moving in their humanity" (Goswamy 2011 p.769).

The Fraser Album paintings were sent back to Scotland, or returned with James Fraser (see lot 48). They remained in the family's possession until 1979 when they were discovered among the brothers' papers in Inverness. Sotheby's auctioned the group in two sales, the first in London on 7th July 1980 and the rest in New York on 9th December the same year. The group, which occupy a hugely important place in the study of later Indian painting, were thoroughly brought to light with the publication of Toby Falk and Mildred Archer's book *India Revealed: The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35* (London, 1989). The book provided the first overview of the paintings which – in Falk's words – "surpass all known Company portraits" for their "special intensity, [...] unusual skill and accomplishment" (Falk 1988).

Today, pages from the Fraser Album are in a number of private and public collections worldwide, including the Islamic Art Museum Malaysia, the British Library, the British Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the David Collection, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and the Art Institute of Chicago.



***40**

UMMEE CHUND IN THE UNIFORM OF SKINNER'S HORSE

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, DATED MAY 1819

Opaque and translucent pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down on buff album page, reverse with original backing paper attached with pencilled English, with cover sheet with English inscription, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 12 x 8¾in. (30.5 x 22.2cm.); folio 16¼ x 12¼in. (41.2 x 31cm.)

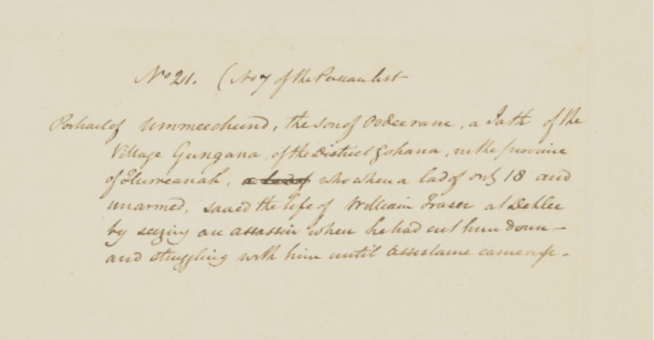
£150,000-250,000
US$210,000-340,000
€180,000-290,000

PROVENANCE:
Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album,* 9 December 1980, lot 160

EXHIBITED:
Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-20

LITERATURE:
M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser,* London, 1989, no.18, pp.44-5
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School*, Gurgaon, 2007, pl.39, p.59
B.N. Goswamy, "Masters of the Company Portraits" in M.C. Beach, E. Fischer and B. N Goswamy (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting,* vol. II, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, 11/11, Zurich, 2011, p.770, no.10
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, no.95, p.195

INSCRIPTIONS:
Inscribed on cover-paper in William's hand:
Ummee Chund the son of Oodey Ram by birth a Jath of vil. Gungana District Gohana province Hissar or Hurreeanah. The man who saved my life when an assassin cut me down by seizing him tho' unarmed himself. In his troop dress - done in May 1819'
Later inscribed by E.S. Fraser:
Portrait of Ummeechund, the son of Oodee ram, a jath of Village Gungana, of the District Gohana, in the province of Hurreeanah. Who when a lad of only 18 and unarmed, saved the life of William Fraser at Delhee by seizing an assassin when he had cut him down - and struggling with him until assistance came up'.


No 21. (No 7 of the Persian list
Portrait of Ummeechund, the son of Oodee ram, a Jath of the
Village Gungana, of the District Gohana, in the province
of Hurreeanah, ~~a lad of~~ who when a lad of only 18 and
unarmed, saved the life of William Fraser at Delhee
by seizing an assassin when he had cut him down -
and struggling with him until assistance came up.

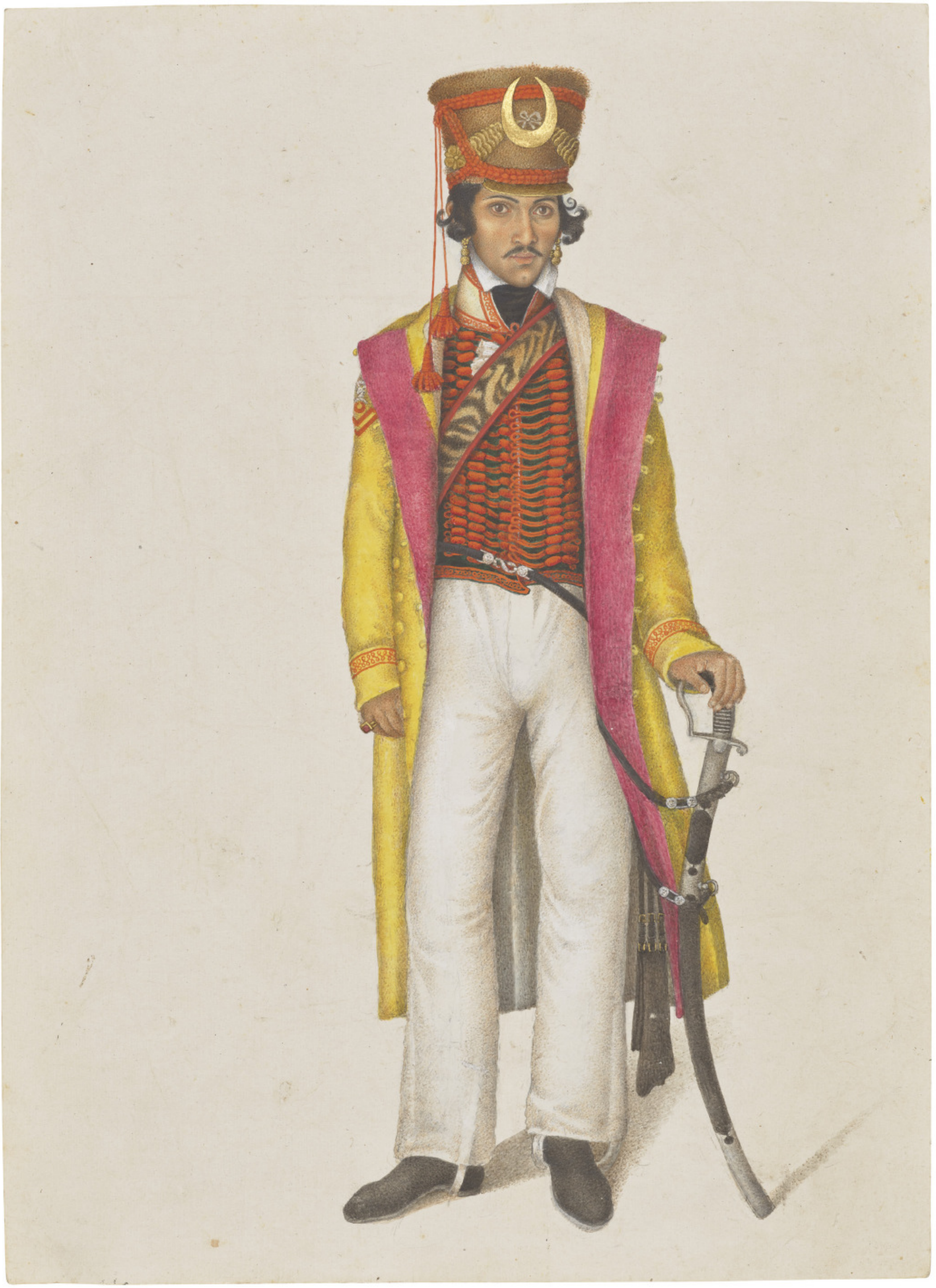
This captivating portrait is one of the greatest single figure studies from the Fraser Album. Incisive, penetrating and full of exquisite detail, it exemplifies the brilliance with which the Fraser artist was able to capture the very essence of his subjects.

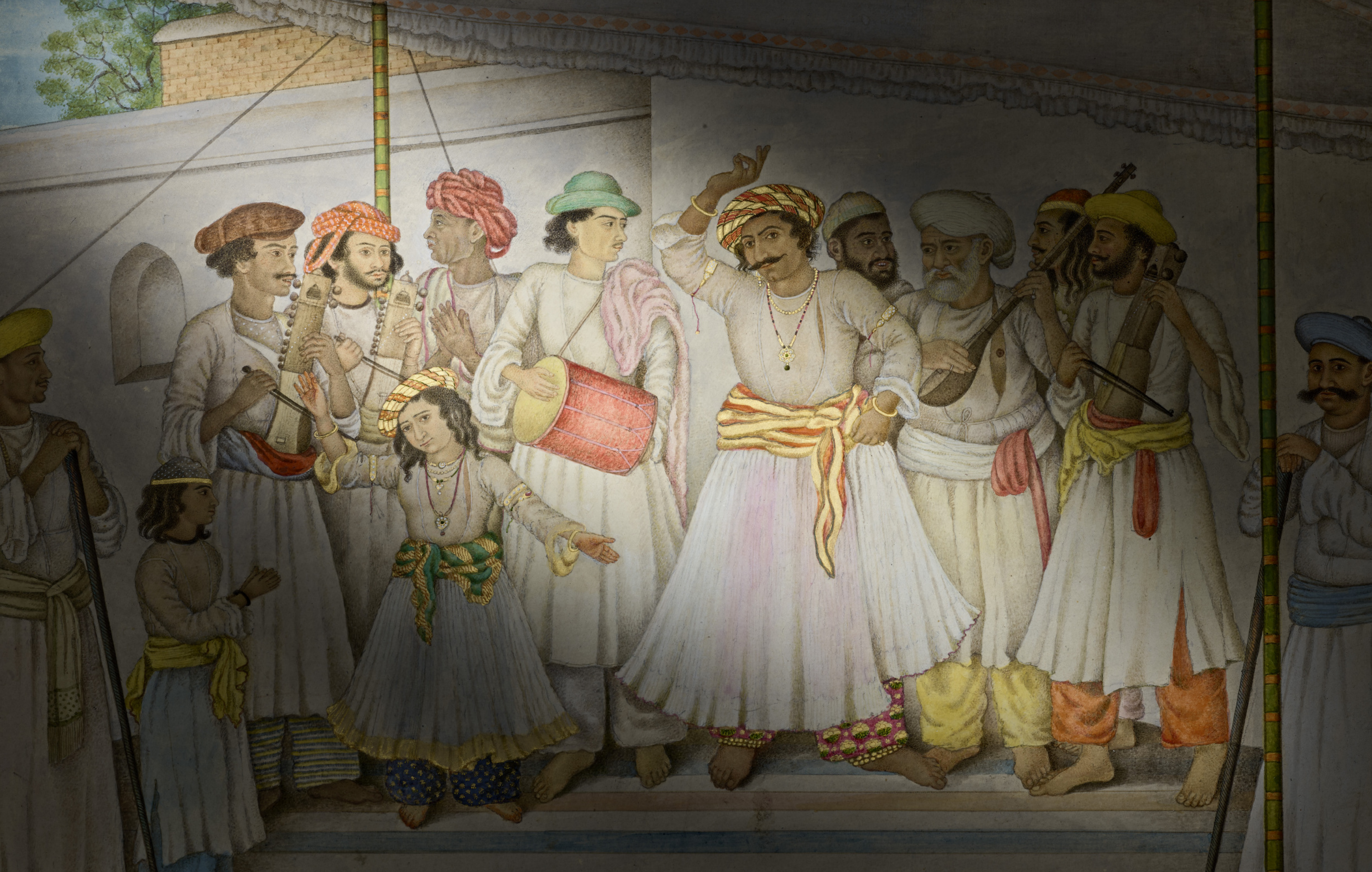
The striking figure depicted is Ummee Chund, the man who saved William Fraser's life during an assassination attempt in Panipat on 18 March 1819. The event, and his rescuer, clearly made a deep and lasting impression on William, and once recovered, he wrote a long letter to his brother James recounting the event. At the end of the letter, he wrote, "You remember Ummeechund, he was with us in the hills...a lad then of 19 or 20, tall & good looking. I now owe my life to him & shall take care to have his life made a comfortable one' (quoted in Dalrymple 2019, p159).

This is one of two portraits of Ummee Chund in the Fraser Album, but the only single-figure study. The first, painted three years earlier in 1816 was formerly in the Collection of Baroness Helen Bachofen von Echt, and is published in Archer and Falk 1989, fig.61. In that portrait, Ummee Chund is depicted as one of three 'recruits' wearing white pantaloons and a turban and carrying a spear. Many of the "finest portrait studies in the Fraser Albums were done from life when young men first came into camp to be enlisted in what became the Second Regiment of Skinner's Horse" (Losty and Roy 2012, p.221). By contrast, here Ummee Chund is now established amongst the ranks of Skinner's Horse and cuts a fine figure in his magnificent pink and yellow uniform in a painting that Archer and Falk refer to as "one of the most impressive of the single portraits" in the album (1989, p.40).

The level of detail with which Ummee Chund's costume is rendered is exquisite. From the tiger-skin cross-belt and bright red frogging on the tunic, to the observation of the corporal's stripes on the right arm and the gold earrings, delicate fur hat and luxuriant curling hair, this painting is a real tour de force. As described by B.N. Goswamy, "this portrait is superb. The rich colouring and elegant cut of the uniform apart – embroidered tunic, long trousers, flowing gown, tall cap, tassels, curved sword in its scabbard – it is the look on the face that is so arresting. Ummee Chand, a Jat from Gohana, was apparently very young, on the threshold of youth, when he – to the astonishment of everyone – took on the armed assailant single-handedly and bought him down...... Here he stands with his smooth young face looking as if with disbelief at his own brave deed. There is something quite moving in the rendering" (Goswamy 2011, p.777).

Colonel James Skinner (1778-1841), the son of a Scottish soldier father and a Rajput mother, was a close friend of the Fraser brothers. Initially denied service with the East India Company, he began his career as a mercenary in the Maratha cavalry, before being ejected from their ranks because of his British blood. He was later recruited by the East India Company when Delhi fell to them in 1803, and raised the first regiment of Irregular Cavalry, later known as Skinner's Horse, or the 'Yellow Boys', at his estate at Hansi in Haryana. Skinner's Horse was made up of local cavalrymen recruited from the villages of Mewatti, Maratha and Rohilla near Delhi. They became famous for their horsemanship and skill with weapons and were soon regarded as the most magnificent cavalry force in North India. "The Yellow Boys [from Skinner's Irregular Horse], highly trained, were to prove themselves the fittest and most energetic soldiers of the whole force, always arriving first at the destination" (Falk and Archer 1989, p.29). William Fraser was offered the rank of Major, and the position of second in command in Skinner's Horse, which he accepted in October 1817. So close were William Fraser and James Skinner that after the second, and ultimately successful assassination attempt on William's life, Colonel Skinner paid for a magnificent marble tomb to be erected for him in St. James Church in Delhi and is himself, buried next to him.





A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

*41

A STORYTELLER PERFORMING WITH MUSICIANS AND MALE DANCERS

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1816-20

Opaque and translucent pigments heightened with gold on card, set within black rules, the margins gold, reverse plain, original backing paper with Persian inscription identifying figures and an English label in Fraser's hand identifying the scene, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 11⅝ x 16in. (29.5 x 40.8cm.); folio 12¼ x 16½in. (31 x 41.8cm.)

£300,000-500,000
US$410,000-680,000
€350,000-580,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's London, *Catalogue of Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer*, 7 July 1980, lot 31

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siecle, Musée de la Musique, Paris, 2003

LITERATURE:

A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.80, pp.235-6
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.108, p.215
M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.81, pp.102-03
P. Brugière and J. Bor, *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle*, Paris, 2003, p.194, fig.113
W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal, The Fall of Delhi 1857*, London, 2006, fig.28
N. Chaldecott, *Dhurries, History, Pattern, Technique, Identification*, London, 2003, fig.61, p.45
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School*, Gurgaon, 2007, pl.22, p.38

INSCRIPTIONS:

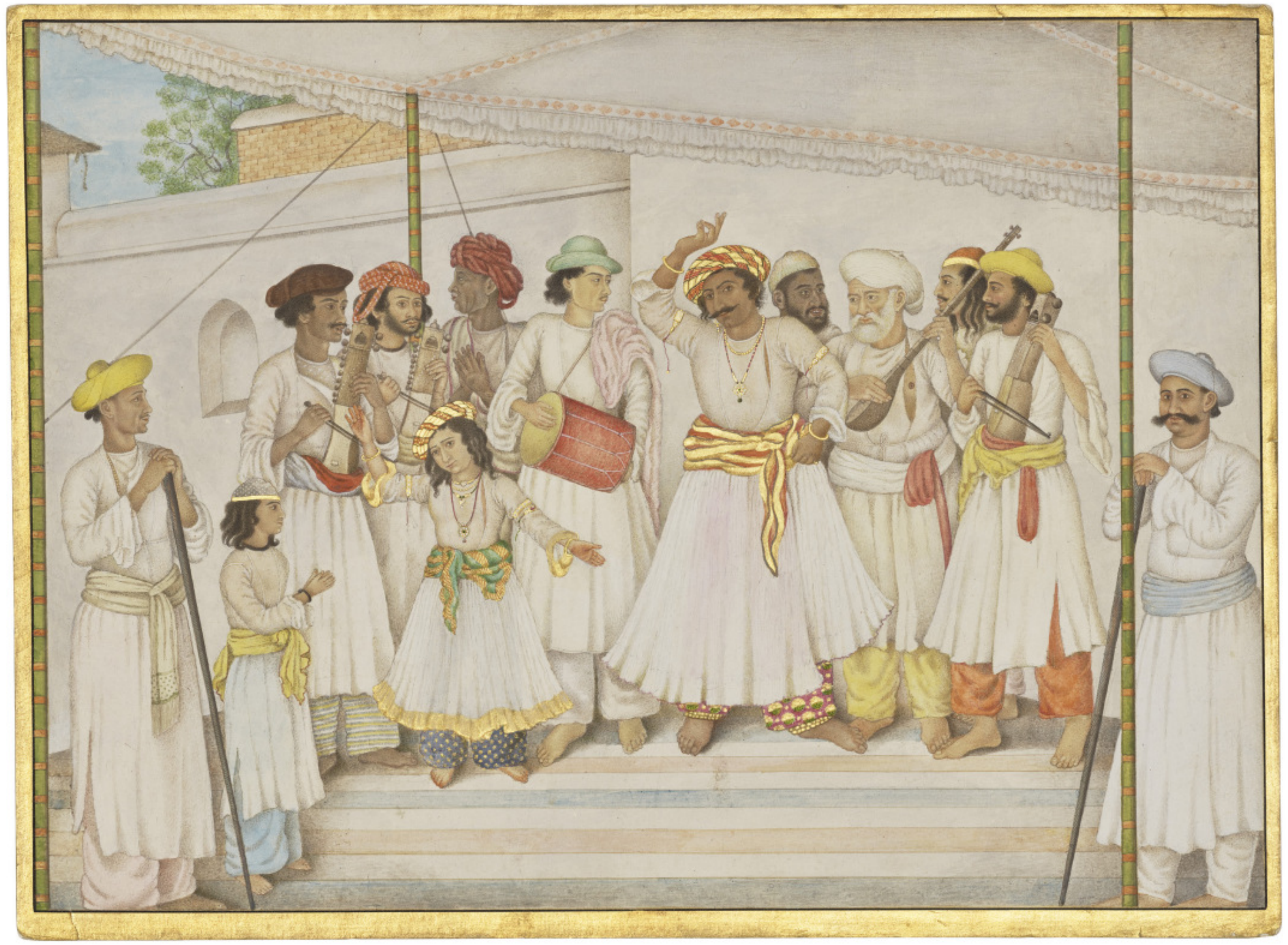
Identified in Persian and in William's hand on the cover paper giving the names, from right to left:
Hazari, stick bearer (chubdar) of Murshidzada Mirza Mughal Sahib Bahadur
Muhammadi Dum(?)
Jugnu
'Abdullah
Piru Naqqal [storyteller]
Saira Naqqal [storyteller], native of Shahjahanabad
Inayatullah, the father of Saira Naqqal
Pana, the son of Saira Naqqal
Qadir Baksh
Talba
Atiqullah
Ram Dhani, stickbearer (chubdar), attendant of the Murshidzadas

This bold and vibrant painting is the only scene of a group of performers in the Fraser Album. It is full of wonderful expression and vitality - as if a spectator at the original performance, one can almost hear the music and the beat of the drum.

Storytelling and music-making were vital parts of Indian culture. In this painting, set against a whitewashed wall and beneath a canopy, a group of figures perform in the courtyard of the residence of a minor prince, identified on the fly-leaf inscription simply as 'Mirza Mughal Sahib Bahadur'. Whilst musicians clap and play instruments, a man dances and a youth recites an accompanying tale. Two *chubdars* (ushers) lean on long staffs on either side of them. One can imagine that opposite the performers, the owner of the house might be sitting watching – perhaps celebrating an important occasion, such as a marriage or the birth of a son. Large *dhurries*, of the type that one sees on the ground here, were often used by affluent classes for special occasions such as these (Chaldecott 2003, p.45). The intention here though is not to focus on the patron, or indeed the event, but on the spectacle and the brilliantly varied group of performers.

Like so many of the characters depicted in the Fraser album, each figure in our painting has a distinct identity and has been carefully observed. From the knowing look of the old man playing the stringed instrument to the slightly uncertain youth, perhaps the son of the principle dancer and his understudy, they all have distinct personalities. The white garments that provide contrast with the strong colours of the turbans, waistbands, and trousers are exquisitely rendered. As Goswamy and Fischer note, there are elements here that feel borrowed from European work – "the frontality, the interest in shadows, the shading in the faces and dresses, [and] the variety and ease of attitudes…but the eye and the hand that register the scene are very Indian" (Goswamy and Fischer 1987, no.108, p.215). The individual inscriptions on the folio identify the various performers. There are three generations of one family within the troupe - the central Storyteller is depicted here with his father and his son, indicating that the profession was one shared by an entire family. The father and son appear to be particularly richly dressed with necklaces, bazubands and patterned trousers, marking them out as special, and perhaps better renumerated, members of the troupe.

Although *nautch* scenes are well known amongst Indian paintings of this period, and many examples are included within this catalogue, very few concentrate on male performers. More often men are depicted as the musicians accompanying female dancers. Elements of this composition were borrowed later by artists, including Mazhar Ali Khan, who painted a number of works for the Metcalfe album (Kaye 1980, p.66). In that depiction, the central dancing figure, whose arm bends up over his head like ours, holds a dupatta veil. The inscription below it reads, 'Mimicks, imitating *Nautch* or Dancing Girls'.



> "Storytelling and music-making of the sort shown here were vital parts of Indian culture, and the unidentified artist who painted this scene offers a keen impression of its drama and colour"
>
> **STUART CARY WELCH AND ANTHONY WELCH**

A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

*42

MALAGUIRE IN HER *NAUTCH* DRESS

ATTRIBUTED TO LALJI, DELHI, INDIA, DATED 3 SEPTEMBER 1815

Opaque and translucent pigments on paper, inscribed to upper edge in Persian, laid down on buff album page, original backing paper inscribed in English, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 10 x 7⅞in. (25.3 x 20cm.); folio 15⅞ x 12in. (40.4 x 30.6cm.)

£70,000-100,000
US$96,000-140,000
€81,000-120,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq.
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 162

EXHIBITED:

Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle, Musée de la Musique, Paris, 2003
Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-20

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser,* London, 1989, no.15, p.36
P. Nevile, *Nautch Girls of India: dancers, singers, playmates,* New York and New Delhi, 1996, no.88, p.125
P. Brugière and J. Bor, *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle,* Paris, 2003, fig.75, p.139
W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal, The Fall of Delhi 1857,* London, 2006, fig.27
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company,* London, 2019, no.92, p.157
Y. Sharma, "The Intermedial Gaze and the Nautch Girls of the Fraser Album" in A. Garimella (ed.), *The Long Arc of South Asian Art: A Reader in Honour of Vidya Dehejia,* London/New Delhi, 2022, p.294, fig.2
K. Butler Schofield, *Music and Musicians in Late Mughal India: Histories of the Ephemeral, 1748-1858*, Cambridge, 2023, p.202
H. Shaffer and Y. Sharma, To Fill "a Gap in Indian History". An Archival Reckoning with the Term *Company Painting, Archives of Asian Art,* 74:1, April 2024, p.100

INSCRIPTIONS:

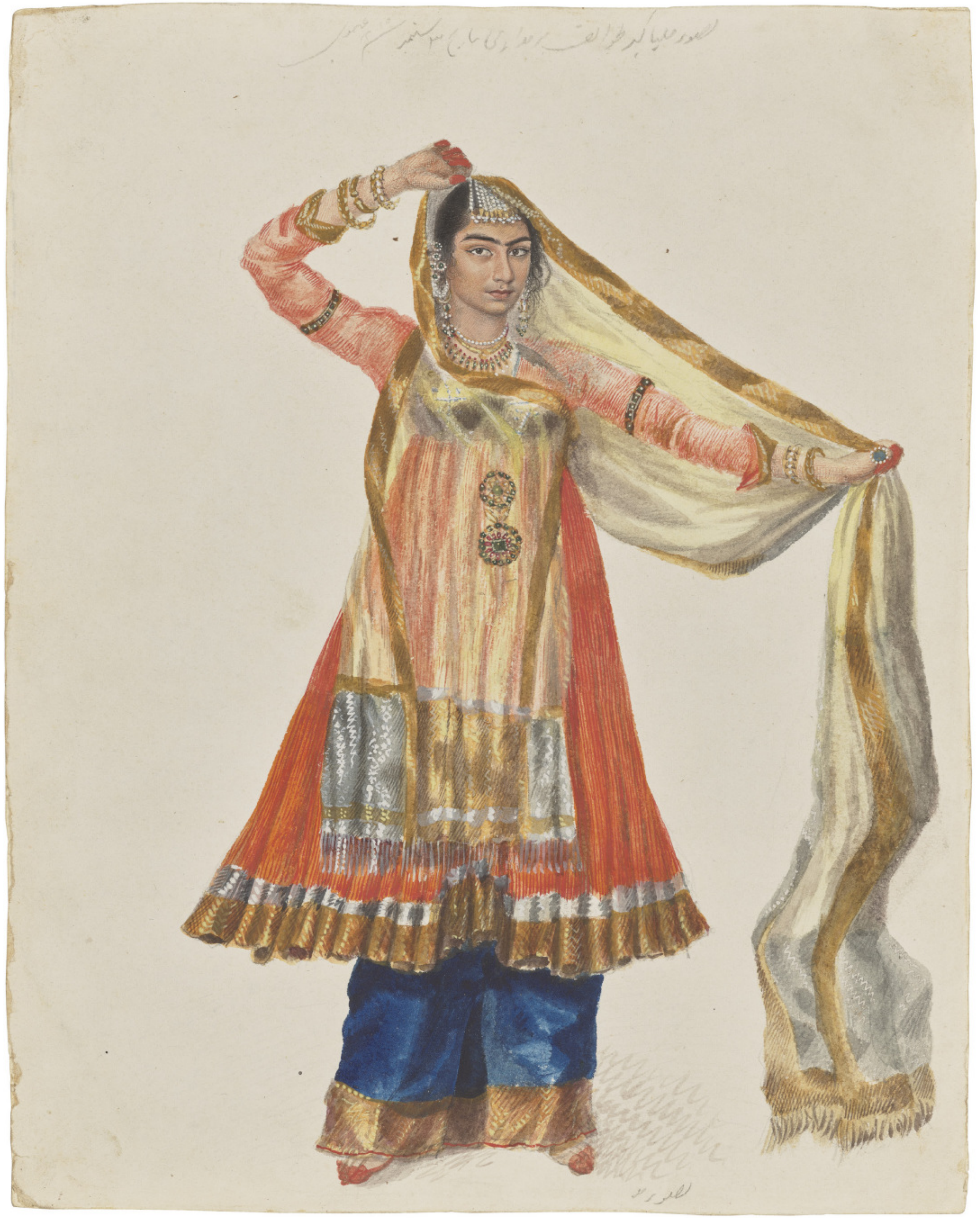
The Persian inscription reads:
Picture of Malaguire dancing girl on the date 3 September 1815 of the Christian era
Identified in transcription by E.S. Fraser:
No. 39, Malageer, a celebrated dancing girl of Dehlee in her Nautch dress

This splendid portrait of the dancing girl Malaguire has become one of the most famous of all of the Fraser Album portraits, due to the wealth of surviving contextual evidence that surrounds it.

In 1815, at a *nautch* at the residence of Bhawani Shankar, a high-ranking official of the Marathas who had resettled in Delhi, James Baillie Fraser was particularly impressed by one of the *nautch* girls, Malaguire. On 19th August he wrote, "Malaguire distinguished herself much again both in the simple *nautches* and in the Bearers dance. I have ordered her picture to be done in one of her attitudes..." (quoted in Archer and Falk 1989, p.37). James does not mention there who the artist was to be but we know that a portrait of Malaguire by Lalji was done, from another of James' diary entries a week later, on 26 August, 'I have had Malaguire the *Nautch* woman here today to sit for her picture and am to get Lalljee to take it'. Although there were two portraits of Malaguire in the Fraser album (the other in a Private Collection, published Archer and Falk 1989, p.127, fig.125), there can be no doubt that this is the one to which James refers. Executed in a distinctive painterly style this is an extraordinarily vivid work in which the famous dancer adopts the culminating pose of the *nautch*, holding out her long, light dupatta veil.

Despite their evident skill, the identities of the artists who contributed to the Fraser album are largely undocumented. The only name that has been found is that of Lalji, who painted only three portraits (Archer and Falk 1989, pl.15 and 124 and fig.11). Lalji had already been asked by James to do a portrait of William, writing that he "takes likenesses remarkably well". This painter, James adds "was a pupil of Zafanies [John Zoffany, who toured India from 1783-89 as a portraitist and who is further discussed in the footnote to lot 52] and does not disgrace his teacher..." (quoted in Archer and Falk 1989, p.37). Although James did not much admire the portrait of William, he wrote that "Soophie's and Malaguire's pictures are both capital."

In their recent publication, Shaffer and Sharma identify that Lalji (ca.1780-1825), and his son Hulas Lal (ca.1785-1875) were itinerant artists who moved between Delhi, Banaras, Patna, Murshidabad and Calcutta, and came to "mix Mughal and British techniques in varying degrees" (Shaffer and Sharma 2024, p.103). Indeed he is referred to as "Lall-jee of Patna" by Reginald Herber (1783-1826) who encountered Lalji's work in Banaras. Perhaps thanks to his association with Zoffany, it is clear that Lalji was a much sought after portraitist in European circles.



A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

*43

EIGHT HORSE MERCHANTS

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1816-20

Opaque and translucent pigments on card, laid down on buff album page, original backing paper with names of figures transcribed in Persian, and cover sheet with the figures listed in English, mounted, framed and glazed
8¾ x 12⅛in. (22.2 x 30.8cm.)

£500,000-800,000
US$680,000-1,100,000
€580,000-920,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album,* 9 December 1980, lot 130

EXHIBITED:

Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-2020

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.99, p.111
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School,* Gurgaon, 2007, pl.53, p.73
Y. Chandra, *The Tale of the Horse, A History of India on Horseback*, New Delhi, 2021, col.pl.3
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, no.105, p.168

INSCRIPTIONS:

The figures numbered and identified in Persian characters and in William's hand on cover paper. Transcribed by E.S. Fraser:
1st. Gool Khan, an Affghan of Kundulpore, a Chlashie or tent pitcher.
2d. Namdar Khan, an Affghan, native of Damaun and nephew of Timorr Khan.
3d. Ismael Khan, a Ghiljee Patan native of Ghaznee.
4th. Loll Khan, a Buchtiaree, native of Drabaun in Damaun, a very rich merchant.
5th. Nadir Khan, an Affghan, son of Timoor Khan.
6th. Ozman Ghunee Khan, a Mearee Patan, nephew of Timoor Khan.
7th. Timoor Khan, a Mearee Patan, a rich merchant inhabitant of the town of Drabaun.
8. Imanee of the Sullum tribe, a native of Khorasan, servant of Tymoor Khan.
These merchants brought capital horses to Dehlee for sale.

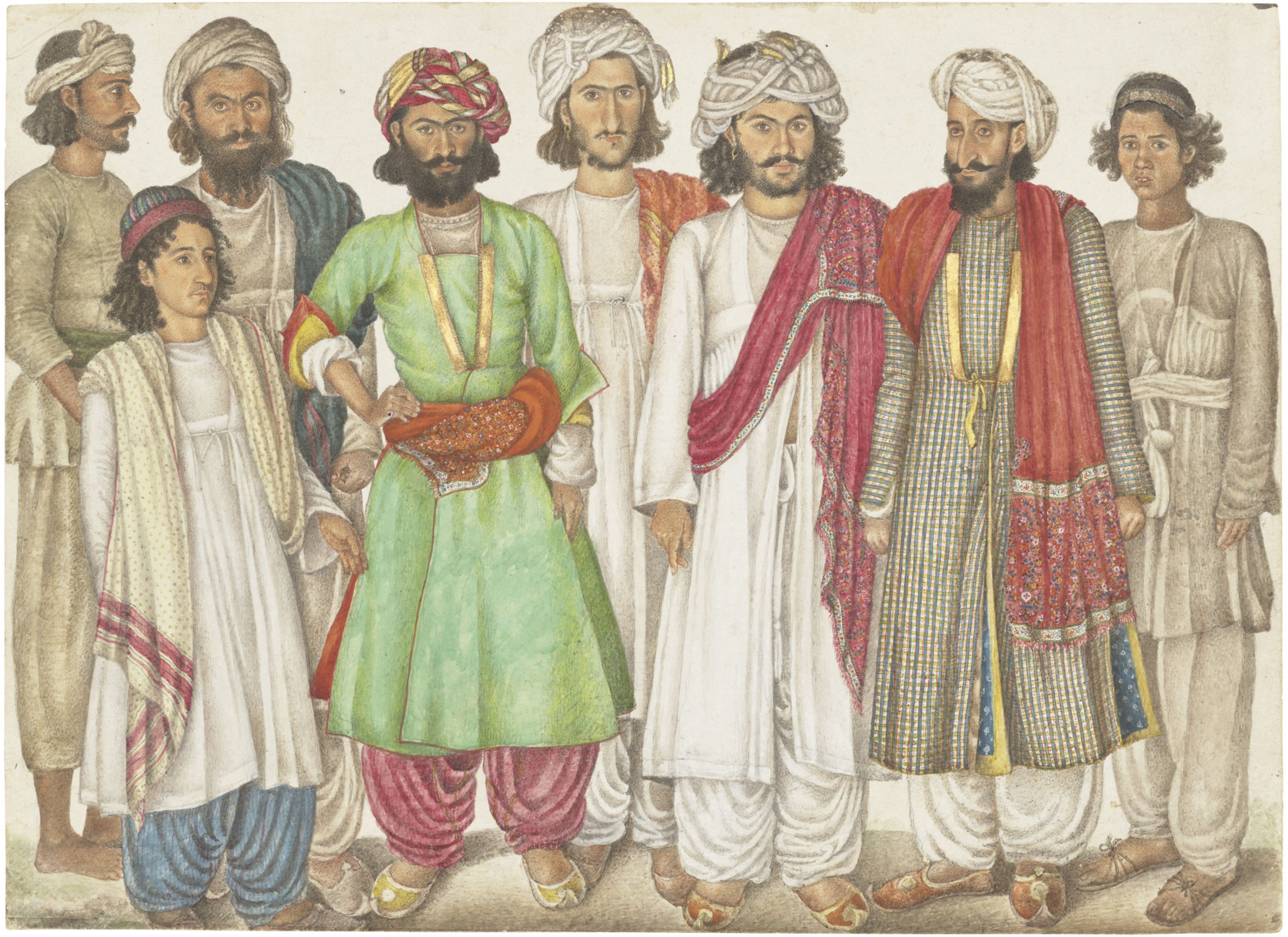
This magnificent group portrait of *Eight Horse Merchants* is amongst the most iconic and unforgettable of the paintings of the Fraser Album. Richly coloured and rendered with extraordinary psychological acuity and immediacy, it is a masterful example of portraiture at its finest.

William Fraser and his friend Colonel James Skinner owned a business importing horses from Afghanistan to India. Afghanistan's climate was much better suited for breeding strong horses than the heat of India. During a journey with Mountstuart Elphinstone's first British Embassy to Afghanistan in 1809, William Fraser recognized the commercial potential of this horse trade. Several paintings in the Fraser Album portray "horsebreeders and merchants with their long beards, hawk-like noses, mountainous turbans, quilted coats and Kashmir shawls" (Dalrymple 2019, p.168).

Like almost all of the paintings of the Fraser album, most of the figures in this portrait are depicted frontally, their faces looking intently at the artist and providing a sense of immediacy that is intensely engaging. The artist on this occasion also depicts one of the figures in profile and others in three-quarter profile - one wonders, has he arranged them deliberately this way, or is this the way that his sitters have naturally gravitated? There is neither inhibition on these faces nor any self-consciousness, although the individuals will almost certainly never have had their likeness taken before. Their gazes are so intense that as the observer, you almost feel the need to break the stare.

The horse merchants in our painting are Afghan. All are depicted in flowing robes and intricately tied turbans. A number of them wear embroidered Kashmir shawls tied around their waists or necks. The two specifically described as 'rich merchants' in William Fraser's identifications are picked out in particularly elegant and colourful robes, one of gold-trimmed green cloth and the other a rich checked material. There is real individualism in the faces and the skill with which the portraits are realised is such that without reading the inscriptions one immediately recognises a father and son pair, Timoor Khan and his son Nadir Khan – their distinctive profiles with long thin faces and hooked noses immediately reveal a familial link.

One of the most recent books in which our painting has been published was *The Tale of the Horse, A History of India on Horseback* by Yashaswini Chandra (2021). The painting's publication in a book on the history of India demonstrates the lasting legacy of the paintings of the Fraser Album. The success of the Fraser artists in so meticulously recording and documenting their subjects, means that these paintings remain to this day relevant documents in the study of Delhi and the surrounding areas in the early 19th century.



A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

*44

PORTRAIT OF KANDAR BAKHSH

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, 1815

Opaque and translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, laid down on buff album page, original backing paper inscribed in English, mounted, framed and glazed
9¼ x 6⅜in. (23.5 x 16.3cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 166

EXHIBITED:

Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire,Geneva, 1998-9
Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle, Musée de la Musique, Paris, 2003
Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-20

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.127, p.128
P. Nevile, *Nautch Girls of India: dancers, singers, playmates,* New York and New Delhi, 1996, no.85, p.120
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.140, p.181-2
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.140, p.181-2
P. Brugière and J. Bor, *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle*, Paris, 2003, fig.76, p.139
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School*, Gurgaon, 2007, pl.38, p.58
B.N. Goswamy, "Masters of the Company Portraits" in M.C. Beach, E. Fischer and B.N Goswamy (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting,* vol. II, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, 11/11, 2011, p.770, no.8
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, no.91, p.156

INSCRIPTIONS:

Inscribed by E.S. Fraser:
No. 43, Kander Bukhsh, a celebrated dancing woman of Dehlee, once considered very beautiful, in the usual undress

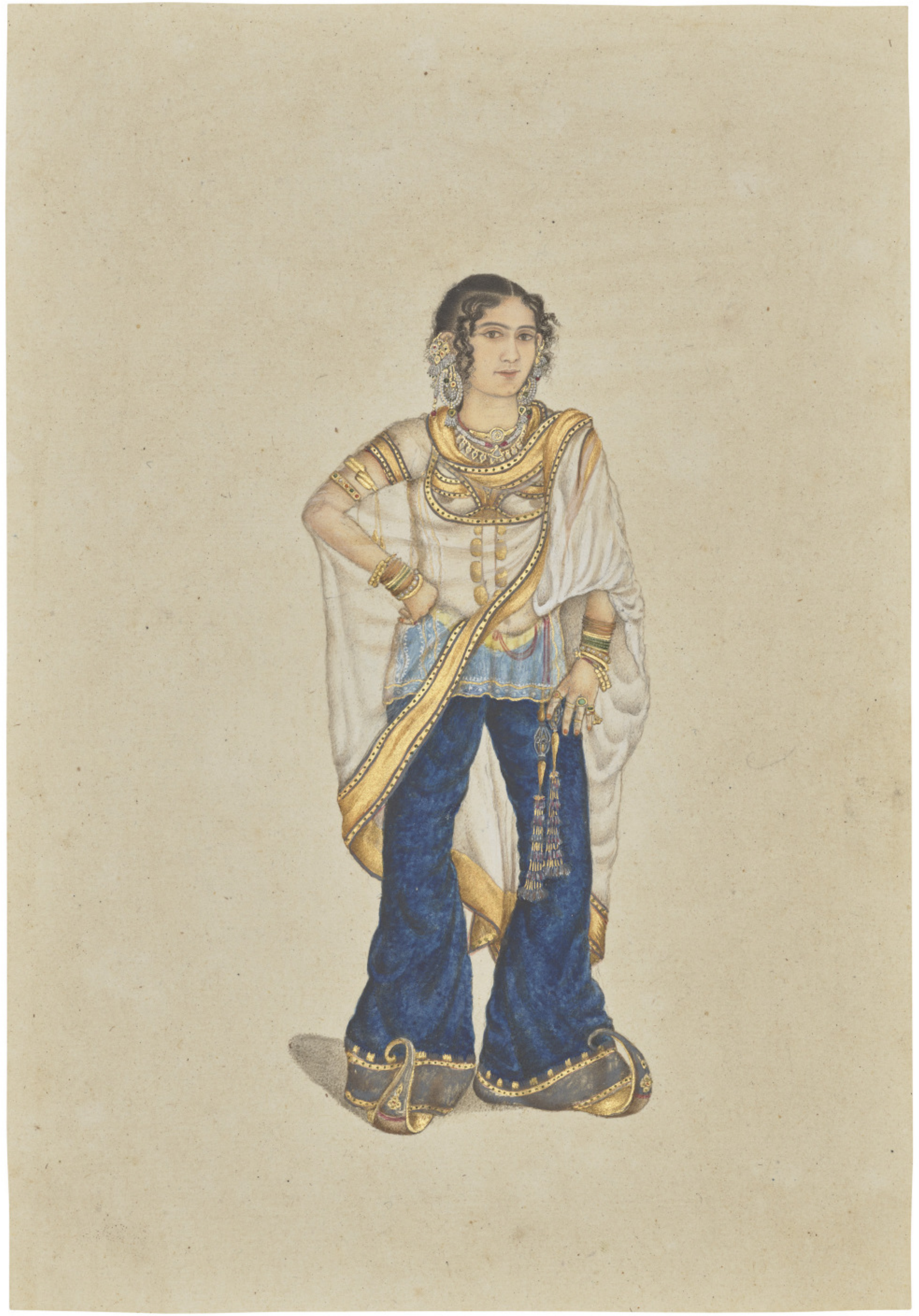
> "...after dinner we had a nautch of a great many setts of nautch women, some of whom were very fair—and the dresses were all very rich"
>
> **JAMES BAILLIE FRASER**

Of the few portraits of female dancers in the Fraser Album, this depiction of Kandar Bakhsh and the one of Peearee Jan in the following lot are perhaps the finest and most memorable. By focusing so penetratingly on these dancers as single figures, the artist has brought them alive before us as characters with their own thoughts and realities.

On their return from the Himalayas in 1815, William introduced James to novel aspects of Delhi life such as Indian music and dancing. Portraits of named courtesans, as well as scenes of male audiences enjoying the *nautch* had proliferated after 1750, with several such paintings, including lots 51 and 52 in the current sale, depicting European patrons in these contexts (Butler Schofield 2023, p.201). William and James Baillie Fraser would have been privy to social entertainments such as *nautch* performances by groups of dancers and musicians, which traditionally had been part of courtly culture and had now become highly sought-after pursuits afforded to the aristocracy and new nobility, including European officers and military men (Shaffer and Sharma 2024, p.101). Colonel James Skinner (1778-1841) retained a troupe of performers and was known for handing out pictorial souvenir of the *nautch* to his guests (for examples of these, see lots 54 and 55 in the current sale).

This painting however, and those of Peearee Jan (see the following lot), and Malaguire (lot 42) are distinct from this public form of spectatorship – they are much more intimate and personal. Without the ensemble cast of performers, one sees the clear individual characters of these dancers. Kandar Bakhsh, here, has a more open look whereas Peearee Jan looks worldly and somewhat untrusting. As Canby writes of this work and the painting of Peearee Jan, "their forthright gazes and revealing clothing emphasize their role as part of the demi-monde in which dancers could also be courtesans, objects of physical desire rather than symbols of spiritual yearning" (Canby 1998, p.182).

The subtle treatment of the drapery, hair and jewellery are the work of a highly accomplished master who has thoroughly adapted to the pictorial requirements of his British patron. Kandar Bakhsh is particularly heavily bejeweled - she wears multiple gold necklaces, bangles, bazubands and earrings, many set with diamonds, pearls and gemstones. If jewellery was a symbol of standing and success then evidently her status was high. As in many of the paintings of the Fraser pages, but unlike that of Malaguire (lot 42), the artist here uses a short shadow to give a sense of depth to the painting, perhaps also in an effort to impress his patron.



A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

***45**

PORTRAIT OF PEEAREE JAN (PARI KHAN)

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, 1815

Opaque and translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, set within pencilled rules with Persian inscriptions above, laid down on buff album page, the backing paper inscribed with her name in English, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9 x 5⅞in. (23 x 14.9cm.); folio 16⅛ x 12⅛in. (41 x 30.8cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 165

EXHIBITED:

Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-20

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.128, p.129
P. Nevile, *Nautch Girls of India: dancers, singers, playmates,* New York and New Delhi, 1996, no.86, p.121
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.139, p.181
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.139, p.181
P. Nevile, *Stories from the Raj, Sahibs, Memsahibs and Others*, New Delhi, 2004, p. 88
W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal, The Fall of Delhi 1857,* London, 2006, fig. 23
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School,* Gurgaon, 2007, pl.88, p.111
B.N. Goswamy, "Masters of the Company Portraits" in M.C. Beach, E. Fischer and B.N Goswamy (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting*, vol. II, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, II/II, 2011, p. 770, no.9, p.778, fig.6
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, no. 90, p. 156
Y. Sharma, "The Intermedial Gaze and the Nautch Girls of the Fraser Album" in A. Garimella (ed.), *The Long Arc of South Asian Art: A Reader in Honour of Vidya Dehejia*, London/New Delhi, 2022, p.295, fig.3

INSCRIPTIONS:

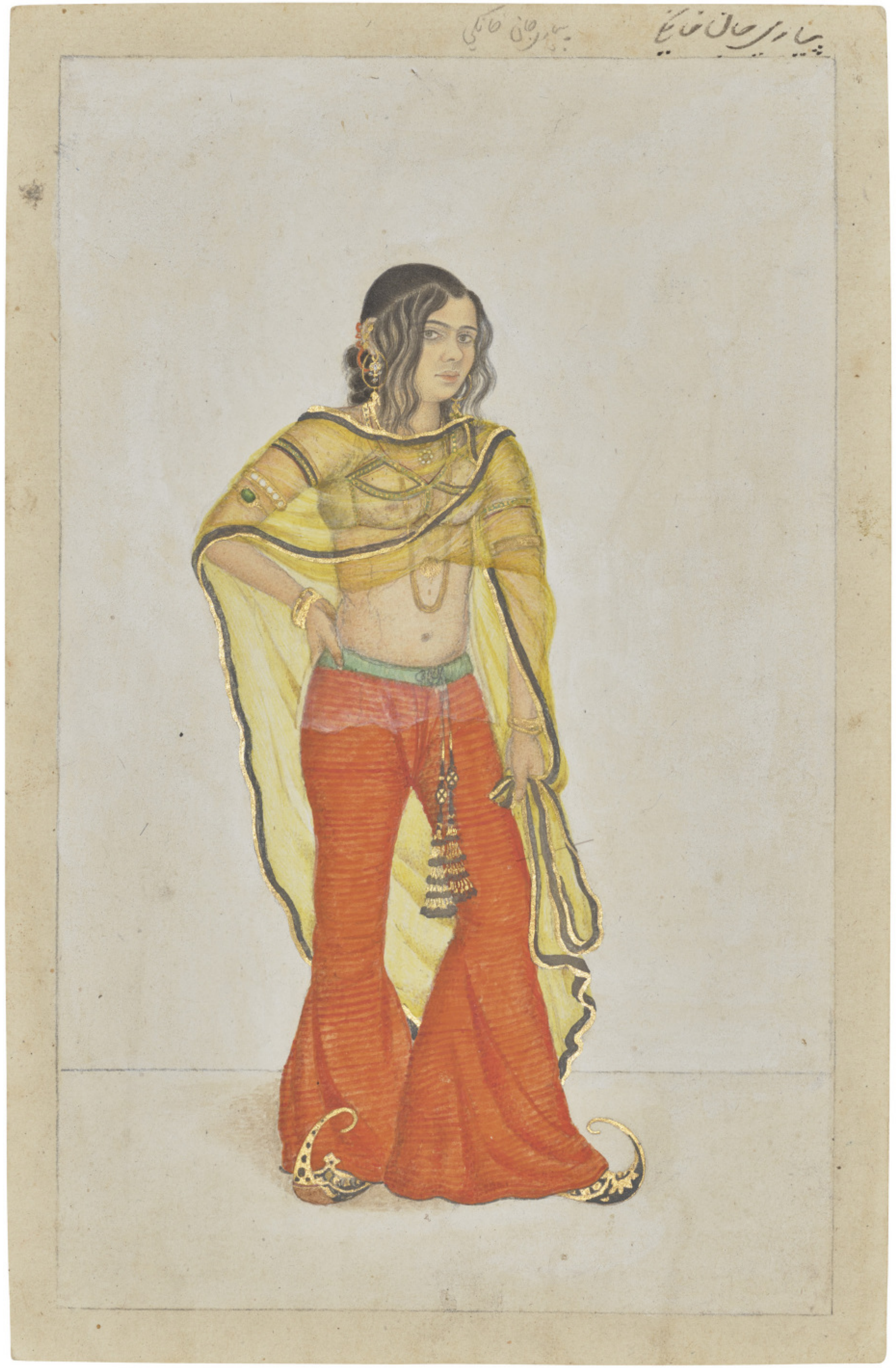
Inscribed in Persian at the top of the backing paper:
Piyari Jan *khanagi* (i.e. in indoor costume)
Identified in transcription by E.S. Fraser:
Peearee Jan, a dancing woman of Dehlee in the usual undress

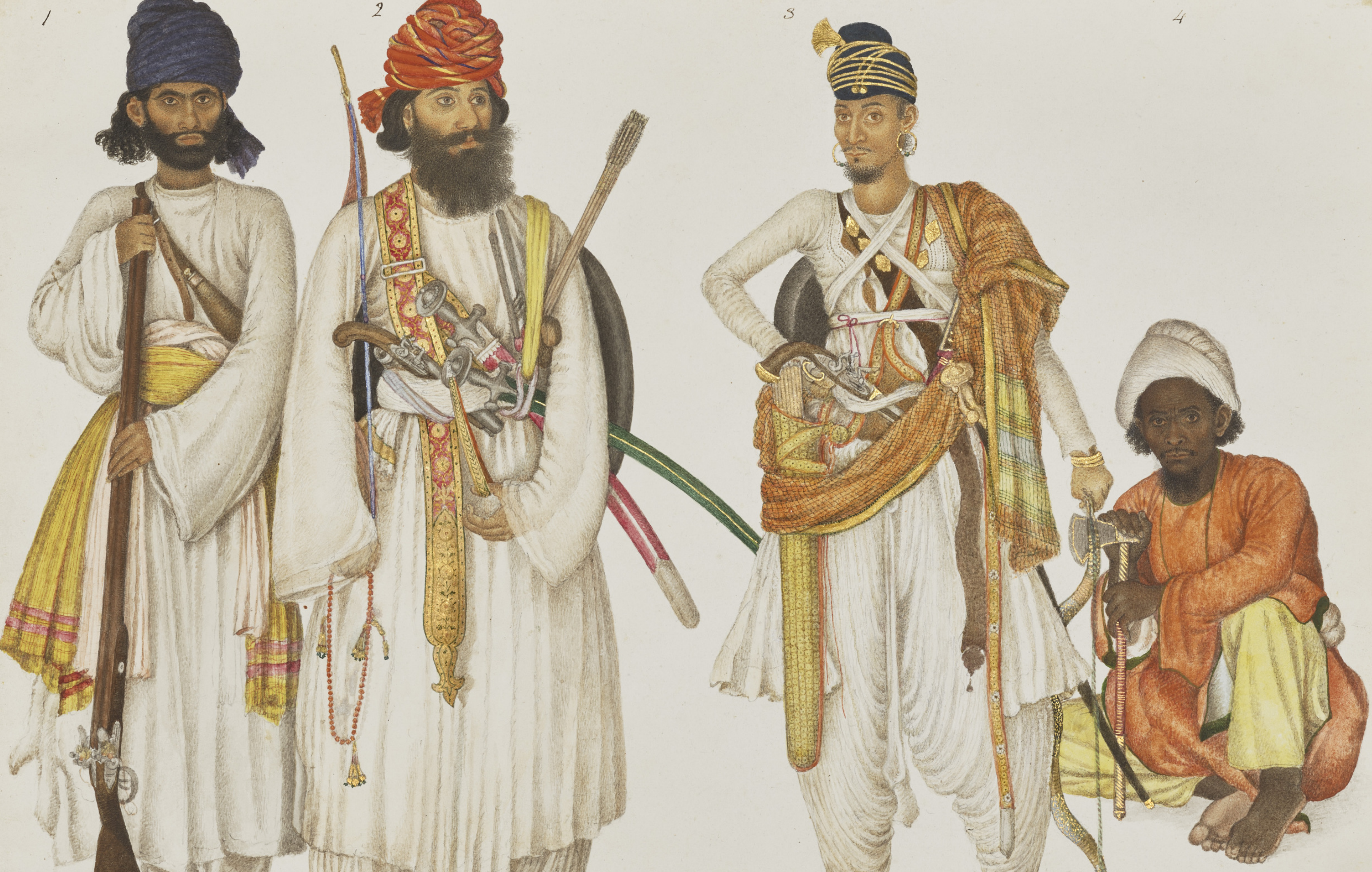
In this memorable portrait, the *nautch* dancer Peearee Jan stands hand on hip and looks out directly and defiantly, as if somehow challenging the viewer. As in the portrait of Kandar Bakhsh (lot 44), the artist's immensely skillful portrayal of Peearee Jan has allowed us to glimpse her character and psychological outlook.

There are only five single-figure portraits of *nautch* girls published in Archer and Falk's comprehensive study of the Fraser Album. Of those, three are presented in this sale. Peearee Jan, illustrated here, Kandar Bakhsh (lot 44) and Malaguire (lot 42), are all depicted in splendidly rich and colourful clothes. They wear eye-catching and widely flared trousers, diaphanous shawls and slippers with extravagantly upturned toes, as well as elaborate ear coverings, necklaces, bangles and belts. There is a real richness to their outfits. From the inscription on this painting, which identifies the subject as Peearee Jan *Khanegi*, we understand that this is their 'indoor costume'. As Goswamy writes, this portrait and others from the Fraser album which depict women, "are wholly different from all those delicate princess and idealized nayikas that one generally sees in Indian painting. These are obviously women of pleasure but of undoubted rank, possessed of a distinct and high place in the society of the times" (Goswamy 2011, p.777).

A painting of *A Group of Nautch Girls* by Ghulam Ali Khan painted in Delhi ca.1800-25 and formerly in the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd is now in the San Diego Museum of Art (1990.395; published Goswamy 2011, fig.4, p.776). That painting has been interpreted as depicting the course of a courtesan's life, from the young ingenue to the proprietress of an establishment. To the right of the painting is a figure who bears strong resemblance to Peearee Jan – both in her dress and in the slightly wary expression on her face. If it is indeed the same person, then this provides a fascinating artistic link and insight into the lives of Delhi *nautch* dancers.

> "Bringing to mind offerings of Emperor Jahangir's wife Nur Jahan to her husband, this transporting portrait was given to Prince Sadruddin by Princess Catherine"
>
> **STUART CARY WELCH**




1
2
3
4

A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

*46

FOUR TRIBESMEN

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1816-20

Opaque and translucent pigments heightened with gold on paper, the figures numbered, laid down on buff album page, original cover sheet and backing pages, the names transcribed in English, mounted, framed and glazed
12⅛ x 8¾in. (22.2 x 30.9cm.)

£350,000-450,000
US$480,000-610,000
€410,000-520,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 136

EXHIBITED:

Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company, The Wallace Collection, London, 2019-20

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.105, p.116
W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal, The Fall of Delhi 1857*, London, 2006, fig.20
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School*, Gurgaon, 2007, pl.52, p.72
W. Dalrymple (ed.), *Forgotten Masters, Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019, no.102, p.165

INSCRIPTIONS:

The inscription identifies the figures as: "1 figure Deen Mahomed Affahan a native of Hyderabad the capital of Scind, a servant of Meer Jellaludeen
2nd figure Seyed Jellaludeen a native of Hyderabad of Scind
3rd figure Goolab Sing, of the Kulla cast, a native of Chum-Koor on the banks of the river Sutlej
4th figure Seedee Barral an inhabitant of Kallaal, nine days' journey from Kandahar"

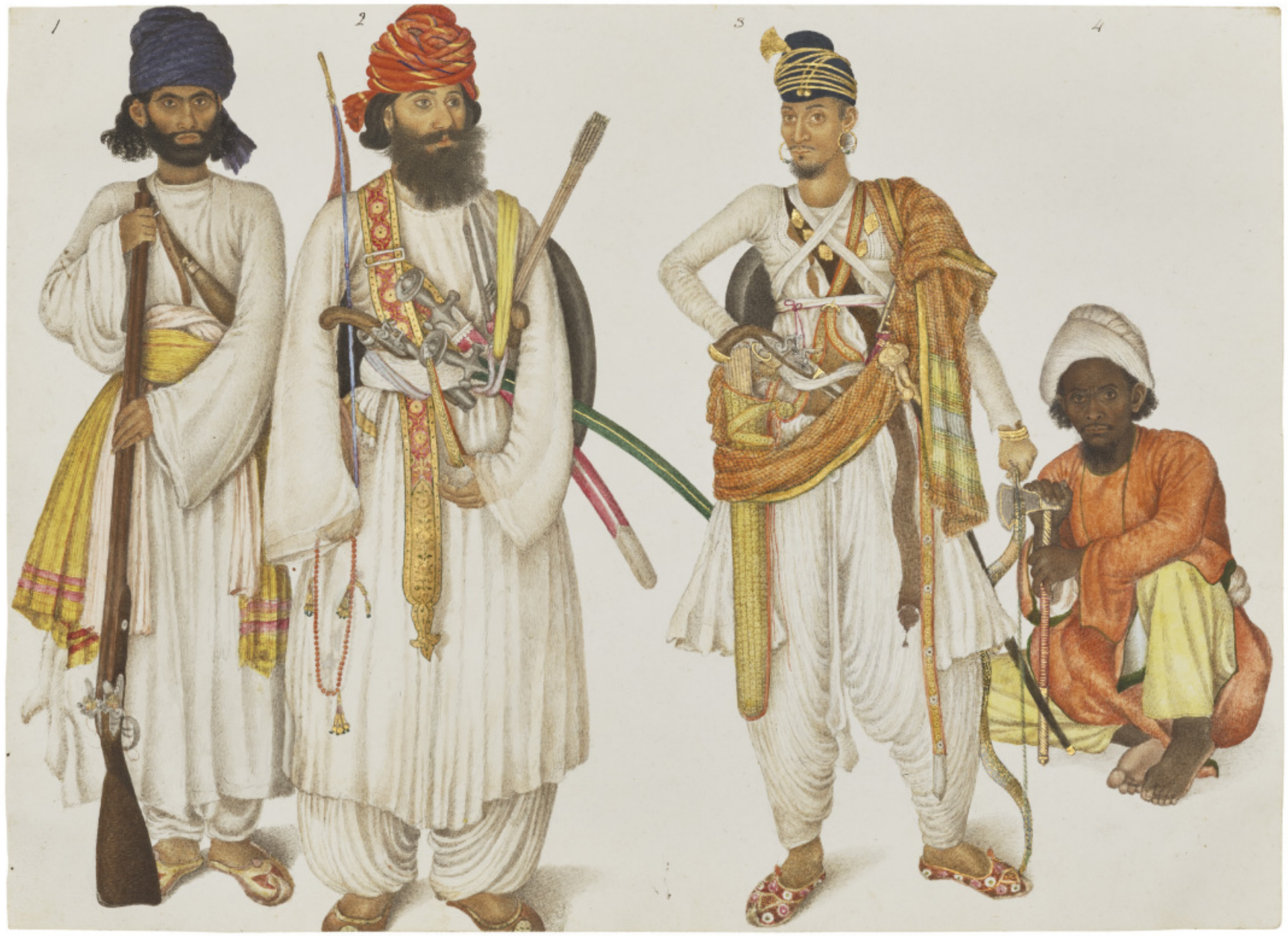
In this superbly painted group portrait, the master artist of the Fraser Album has portrayed a heavily armed group of warriors. Two of the figures look directly at the viewer with an unnervingly direct and penetrating gaze, drawing us directly in to their world.

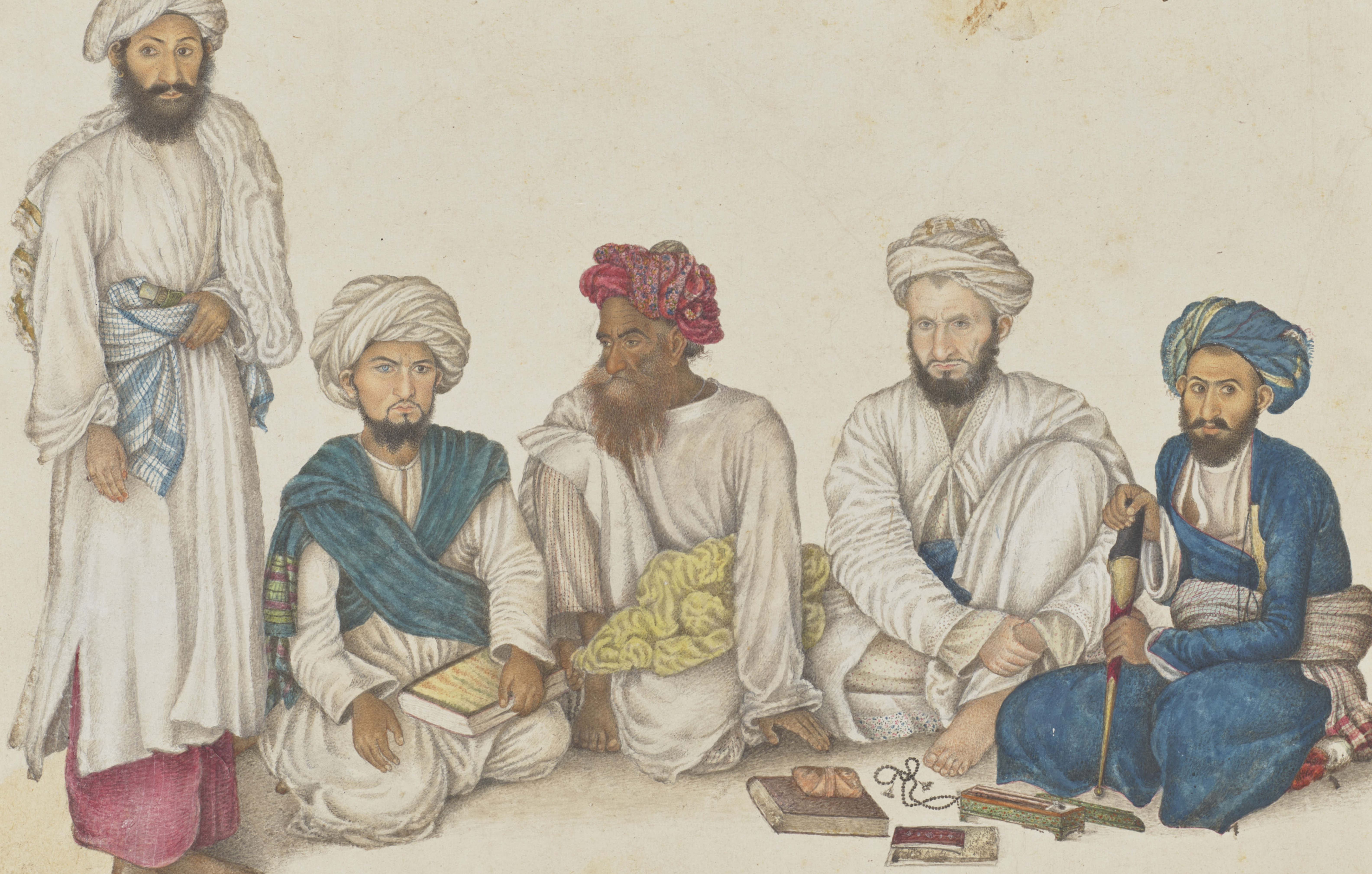
Many of the paintings from the Fraser album depict well-knit groups of figures, be they soldiers, merchants, villagers or dancers. It is likely to have been James' example that led to the surprisingly European compositions of these groups – with related figures formally arranged, either standing or sitting. As Cary Welch commented, these portraits brilliantly capture their subjects characters in a prefiguring of the style of early photographs. Indeed interesting comparisons can be drawn with early photographs of India, such as those of John McCosh, Friedrick Fiebig or Shepherd & Robertson who were all active there in the mid-19th century, a few decades after the Fraser Albums' completion. Two photographs by Fred Bremner, a slightly later 19th century photographer, are worth comparing directly (both in the National Galleries of Scotland). One shows a group of three Afghan warriors standing in deliberate poses with their weapons (PGP.129.44) and the other a group of Pathans and Baluchis (PGP.116.3). The way that some of the figures look directly at the camera in an unnerving manner whilst others look left and right is distinctly reminiscent of the figures in the present painting and in other Fraser Album pages, such as lot 47. The subjects of these photographs, like ours, depict individuals in similarly prescribed arrangements, and were often a response to the same urge to record, categorize and possess the image of India and its people.

In his book *The Last Mughal*, Dalrymple refers to this painting as *Soldiers of fortune seeking employment*. Syed Jellaludeen and Gulab Singh, the two central figures here, are laden with all forms of weapon – from *katars* and bows and arrows to pistols and long *tulwars*. "Encouraged to show every textile, weapon and twist of hair with illusionistic accuracy, the artist proves that the Mughal tradition remained brilliantly alive well into the 19th century" (Stuart Cary Welch, quoted in Losty and Roy 2012, p.222).

“These paintings were painted for William Fraser, perhaps the most perceptive of all British patrons in India, who guided his artists with Jahangir-like devotion. Following his wishes, they projected an exact, sharp-eyed view of India and its people. In effect, they strove to be cameras at a time well before the invention of photography. At their best, the more sensitive and subtle of Fraser's artists carried the Mughal tradition a step further”.

STUART CARY WELCH AND ANTHONY WELCH





A PAGE FROM THE FRASER ALBUM

***47**

FIVE TRIBESMEN

BY A MASTER OF THE FRASER ALBUM, DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1816-20

Opaque and translucent pigments on paper, the figures numbered, laid down on buff album page, original backing paper attached to verso, the cover sheet with names transcribed in English, mounted, framed, and glazed
Painting 8¾ x 12in. (22.2 x 30.6cm.); folio 12 x 16¼in. (30.6 x 41.3cm.)

£350,000-450,000
US$480,000-610,000
€410,000-520,000

PROVENANCE:

Commissioned by William Fraser, Delhi, 1816-1820
In the Collection of William Fraser (1784-1835) and James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 131

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, no.100, p.112

INSCRIPTIONS:

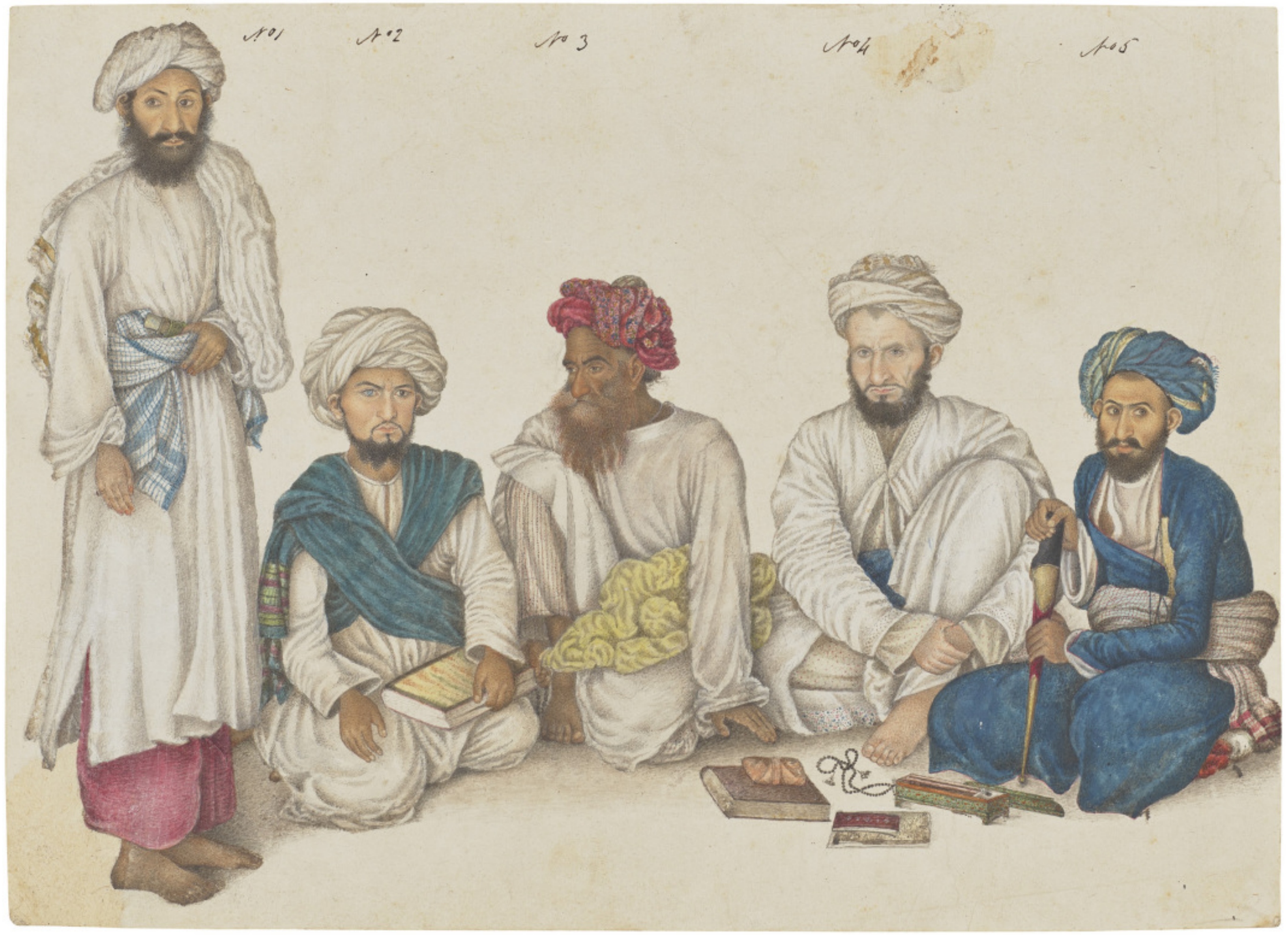
The figures are identified as:
1st figure. Kureem Beg, a Moghul of the tribe of Sasmun, native of Kand'har.
2nd figure. Moolab Baba, of an Arab tribe, born at Shahabanee, but residing at Bokhara, a Scholar come to study with Ghulam Allee at Dehlee.
3rd figure. Mudubak, a native of Caubul, who became a religious recluse at Dehlee.
4th figure. Moluvee Abdul-Kaudar, Toork, born at Constantinople, who came to Dehlee upon a pilgrimage to Shah Gholaum Allee.
5th figure. Khan Mahomed Dooraunee, (descended from Poopul) a Patan born at Kand'har, a horse merchant and jeweller, who came to Dehlee on business

The figures so brilliantly depicted in this painting are all highly individual in character. The master artist who painted this and other portraits in the Fraser Album was phenomenally skilled in his ability to portray individualism and distinct identities, allowing the viewer to feel that, in looking at their portraits, we had actually met these people in the flesh and looked into their eyes.

Thanks to William Fraser's meticulous labelling we know the identities of each of these characters and in many cases their occupations and origins. For many, elements of their personas are further established by the accoutrements that surround them. In this painting the second figure from the left, Moolab Baba, who has one striking blue eye, is described as a 'scholar'. Fittingly he holds on his lap a large book, his finger marking the place where he has paused his reading. The central figure, Mudubak, is described as a religious recluse, and perhaps for this reason avoids eye-contact with the artist. The fourth figure, a Turk from Constantinople, much paler in complexion than his compatriots, is described as travelling to Delhi on a pilgrimage, and is appropriately depicted with prayer beads before him. Finally on the right hand side an elegantly dressed Khan Mohammed Durrani, a horse merchant and jeweller – in Delhi on business. He leans on a large *peshkabz* and has before him a *qalamdan* and a *safina* manuscript, a format typically reserved for poetic texts.

The artist behind these spectacular paintings from the Fraser Album remains unknown. The letters and diaries of the brothers frequently refer to the artists but never give names apart from those of the Patna artists Lalji and his son Hulus Lal. On the basis of differences in hand and approach amongst the paintings, we know that multiple artists must have worked on the project. Traditionally many of the best pages from the album have been attributed to Ghulam Ali Khan (fl.1817-52), a pivotal figure in the last flowering of the Mughal painting tradition, and discussed in some length in the footnote to lot 59 in this sale. However, as has been argued by Jeremiah Losty, it may also be the case that the finest portraits from the album were not his work, but rather that of another highly skilled member of his family or 'circle' who was even more accomplished in the art of portraiture (Losty 2011, p.8). Ghulam Ali Khan was particularly known as the originator of the Delhi topographical school. Amongst numerous other works, he painted the *Diwan-i Khas* which is lot 59 in this sale and its close comparable in the British Library, which he completed in 1817 (Add.Or.4694). If one looks closely at those paintings, the exquisite architectural studies are combined with a less confident command of figural drawing. Given that these works would have been painted whilst work on the Fraser Album was underway, it would have been remarkable for an artist to be so successful in both the brilliance and psychological acuity of the Fraser Album portraits and the superb topographical works at the same time.

Other members of the same family workshop, such as Ghulam Murtaza Khan (active 1809-30) were much in demand for their portraiture and so we know there were very skilled artists in this genre within the family. Although we have no concrete name with whom to associate these paintings, on the evidence of the portraits alone the 'Masters of the Fraser Album' must be considered perhaps the foremost portrait painter in late Mughal India.



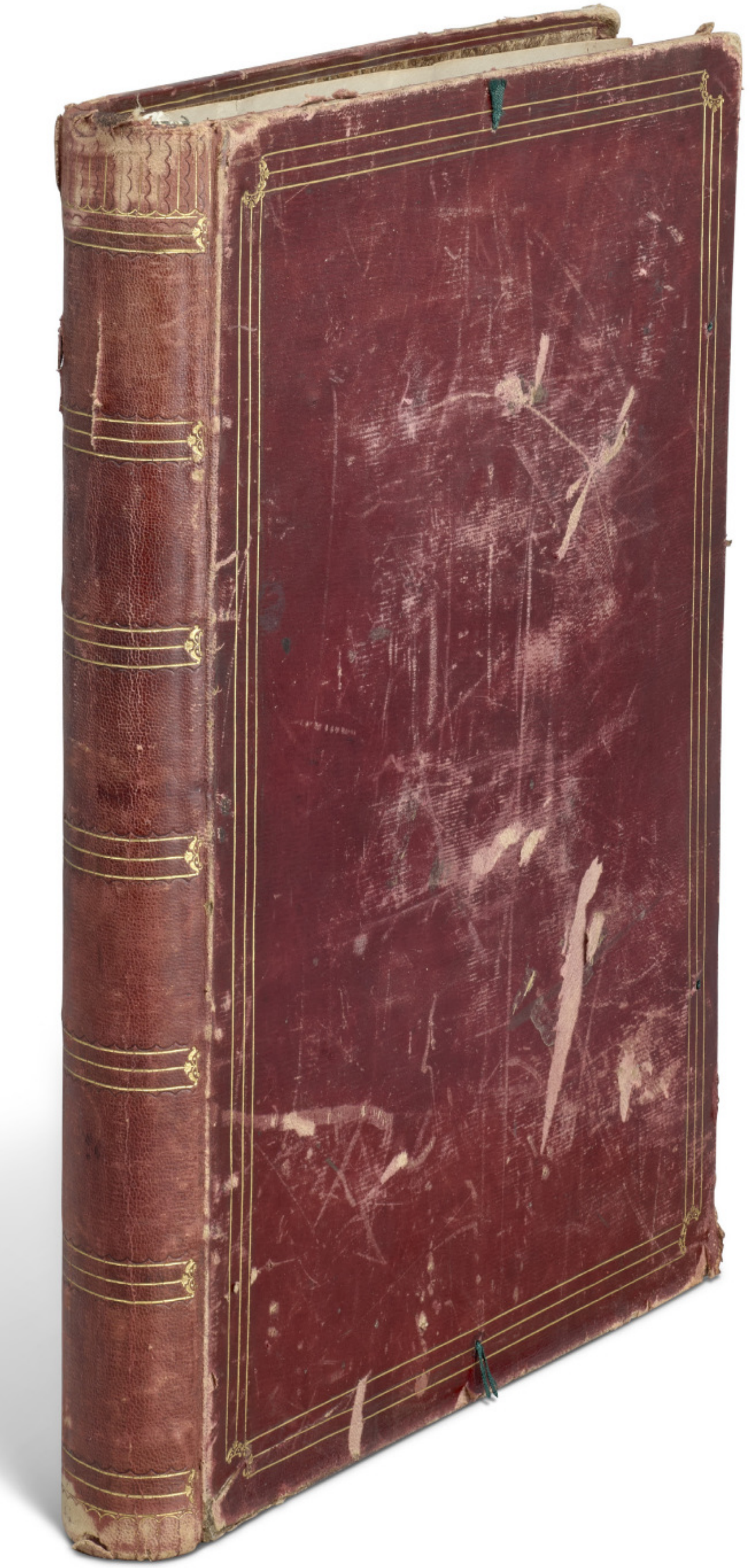
•*48

THE ORIGINAL BINDING OF THE FRASER ALBUM

CIRCA 1819-25

Red leather binding, gilt-tooled with triple border rules and spine bands, the doublures marbled paper, original paper supports
16¾ x 12⅝in. (42.1 x 32cm.)

£5,000-7,000
US$6,800-9,500
€5,800-8,100



PROVENANCE:

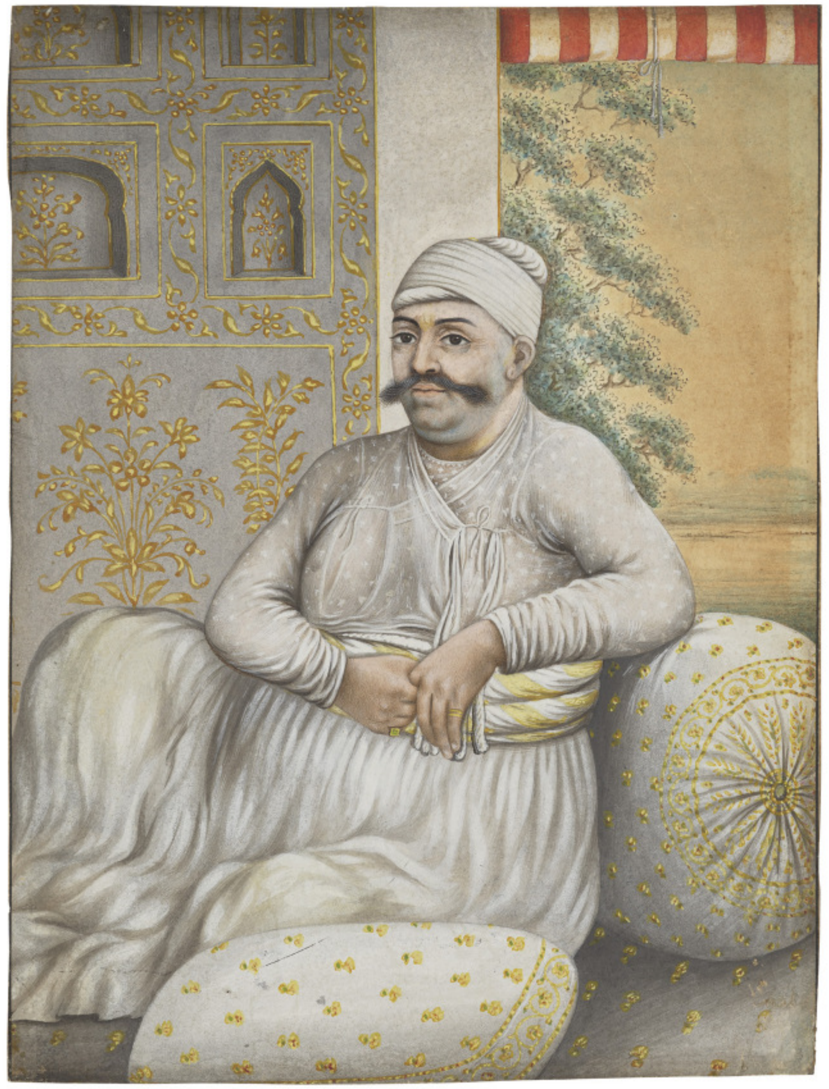
William Fraser (1784-1835) or James Fraser (1783-1856)
By direct descent in the Fraser family in Scotland to Malcolm R. Fraser, Esq
Sotheby's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, 9 December 1980, lot 184

LITERATURE:

M. Archer and T. Falk, *India Revealed, The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser*, London, 1989, p.137

In 1819, William recounted in a letter to his father that he had just sent James forty paintings, which he hoped his brother would then send back to their home in Scotland. He looked forward to the nostalgia he would feel when 'some years hence I shall con them at Moniack, with recollections that never can leave my heart' (Archer and Falk 1989, p.40). On receiving the portraits, James was effusive in his praise. On 30 October 1820, he sent his father a letter saying that 'the native Drawings of Costume will form unquestionably the finest collection that ever visited England from hence & include all the inhabitants of all the districts near Dihlee' (Archer and Falk 1989, p.40). Unfortunately, William would never see the paintings again, or experience the pleasure of peaceful recollection in Scotland. He died in India at the hands of an assassin in 1835. James, however, doubtless derived hours of enjoyment from them in his later years, the paintings reconnecting him with his lost brother and the time they spent experiencing the dazzling and varied sights of late Mughal India.

The Fraser album was rediscovered in 1979, along with the family papers. Archer and Falk write that at that stage about half were mounted in an album, the others loose. They describe each picture as being painted on stout paper, most with a cover paper of thin paper - a few pictures with two cover-papers. Many of the paintings in the first London sale (Sotheby's London, 7 July 1980), including the *Storyteller and Musicians* offered here (lot 40) were loose pictures. At the New York auction later that year (Sotheby's New York, 9 December 1980), the contents that had been mounted in the album were sold. These were all loosely mounted on grey paper sheets. Descriptions by Edward Satchwell Fraser, William's younger brother – based on the information supplied by William's inscriptions – are found on the plain paper inter-leaves. Edward numbered his descriptions in the order that the paintings appeared in the album so we know where these lots featured in the sequence. It seems that lots 39, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45 from the present sale were all included. Many of the paintings in the album were also numbered by William. His inscriptions are written in pencil, usually on the cover-paper. The information he gives is frequently derived from the Persian inscriptions, that were originally done in pencil on the backs of the works but later re-inked (Archer and Falk 1989, p.137).



***49**

NAWAB ASAF AL-DAWLA (R.1775-97)

LUCKNOW, INDIA, CIRCA 1785-90

Opaque pigments on paper, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
6⅝ x 4⅞in. (16.7 x 12.5cm.)

£10,000-15,000
US$14,000-20,000
€12,000-17,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's London, *Fine Islamic and Indian Miniatures, Manuscripts and Maps,* 7 July 1976, lot 106
Christie's London, *Islamic and Indian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 17 November 1976, lot 43
Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1986

EXHIBITED:
Miniatures Orientale de l'Inde, 4, Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1986

LITERATURE:
M-C. David and J. Soustiel, *Miniatures Orientale de l'Inde,* 4, Paris, 1986, no.16, pp.28-9
M. Archer, *India and British Portraiture 1770-1825*, London, 1979, pp.144

"Mild in manners, generous to extravagance, and engaging in his conduct." These were the words written by Lewis Ferdinand Smith in March 1795 about Asaf Al-Dawla, the Nawab of Awadh, who ruled from 1775 until 1797 (Archer 1979, p.144). Although loyal to the Mughal Emperor in Delhi, the Nawabs of Awadh effectively ruled independently and presided over a period of great wealth, productivity and peace following the subsidiary alliance with the British East India Company made by Shuja al-Dawla (r.1754-75), the third Nawab of Awadh and father of Asaf al-Dawla. It was during the reign of Asaf al-Dawla that the capital of Awadh was moved to Lucknow where lavish sums were spent transforming the city into one of the most splendid of the age, as evidenced by contemporary reports such as that of Lewis Ferdinand Smith above.

Although regarded as extensive extravagance, the splendid court culture fostered by the Asaf al-Dawla in Lucknow, as Shuja al-Dawla had begun in Faizabad before him, created a hugely fertile environment for the arts. The importance of these two rulers cannot be overestimated and resulted in a distinctively vibrant, urbane and sophisticated aesthetic upon which future artistic achievement was built (Markel 2015, pp.17-18). This prosperity of the Lucknow court attracted to it numerous European and British adventurers and residents seeking to serve the Nawab, often militarily. Figures such as John Wombwell (see lot 53), Antoine Polier (see lots 51 and 52) and Claude Martin would achieve great fame and wealth in Lucknow and attract prominent European artists to Awadh. John Zoffany was one of these artists and took numerous sketches and produced paintings of both Shuja al-Dawla and Asaf al-Dawla (1833-1810). A famous portrait of Asaf al-Dawla by Zoffany from 1784 is now in the India Office Library (Archer 1979, no. 89, p.147). Compared to that painting, the present portrait shows the Nawab slightly older with slightly greying beard. Where we find a youthful intensity in the Zoffany painting, here the Nawab radiates a sense of stately calm whilst the extensive gold details on the architecture and textiles hint at the wealth and extravagance for which Asaf al-Dawla was known.

***50**

AN ATTENDANT DELIVERING A LETTER

MURSHIDABAD, INDIA, CIRCA 1790

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within white and black rules, mounted to card, framed and glazed
11⅜ x 9⅛in. (28.8 x 23.2cm.)

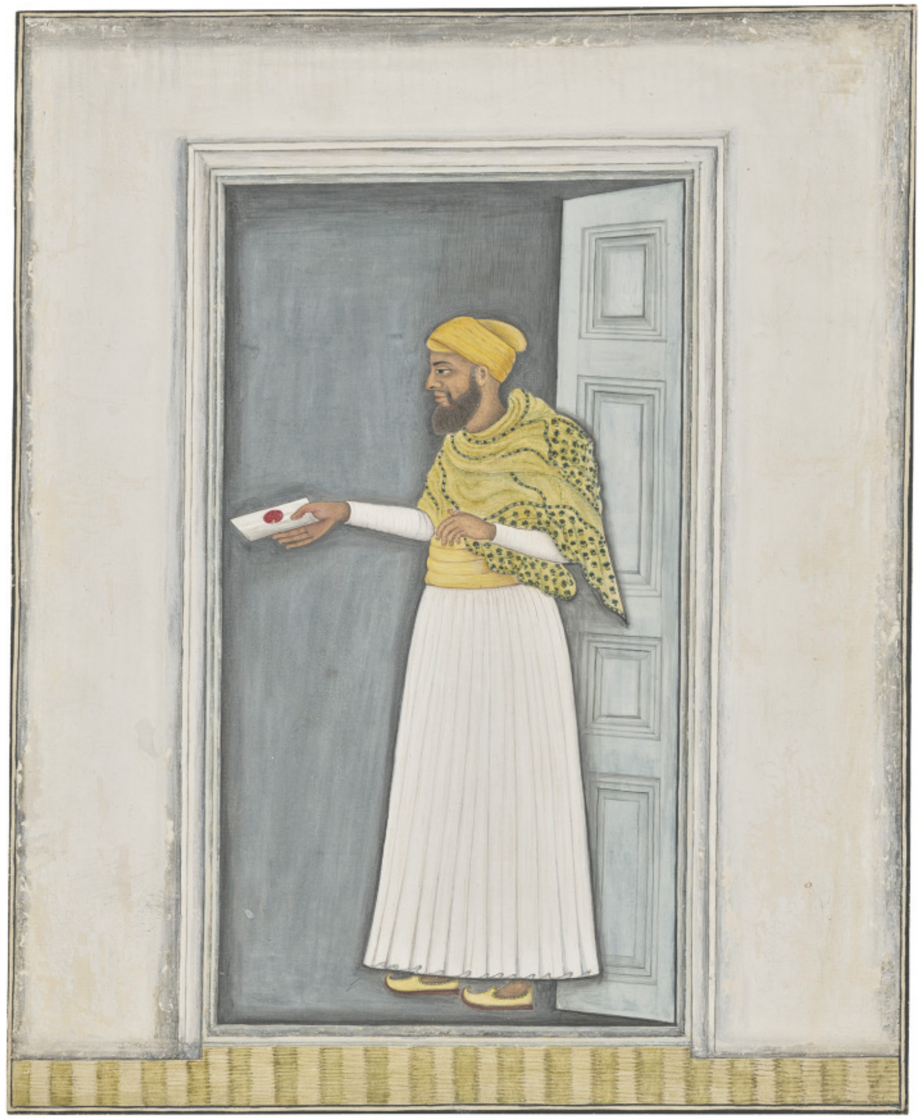
£8,000-12,000
US$11,000-16,000
€9,300-14,000

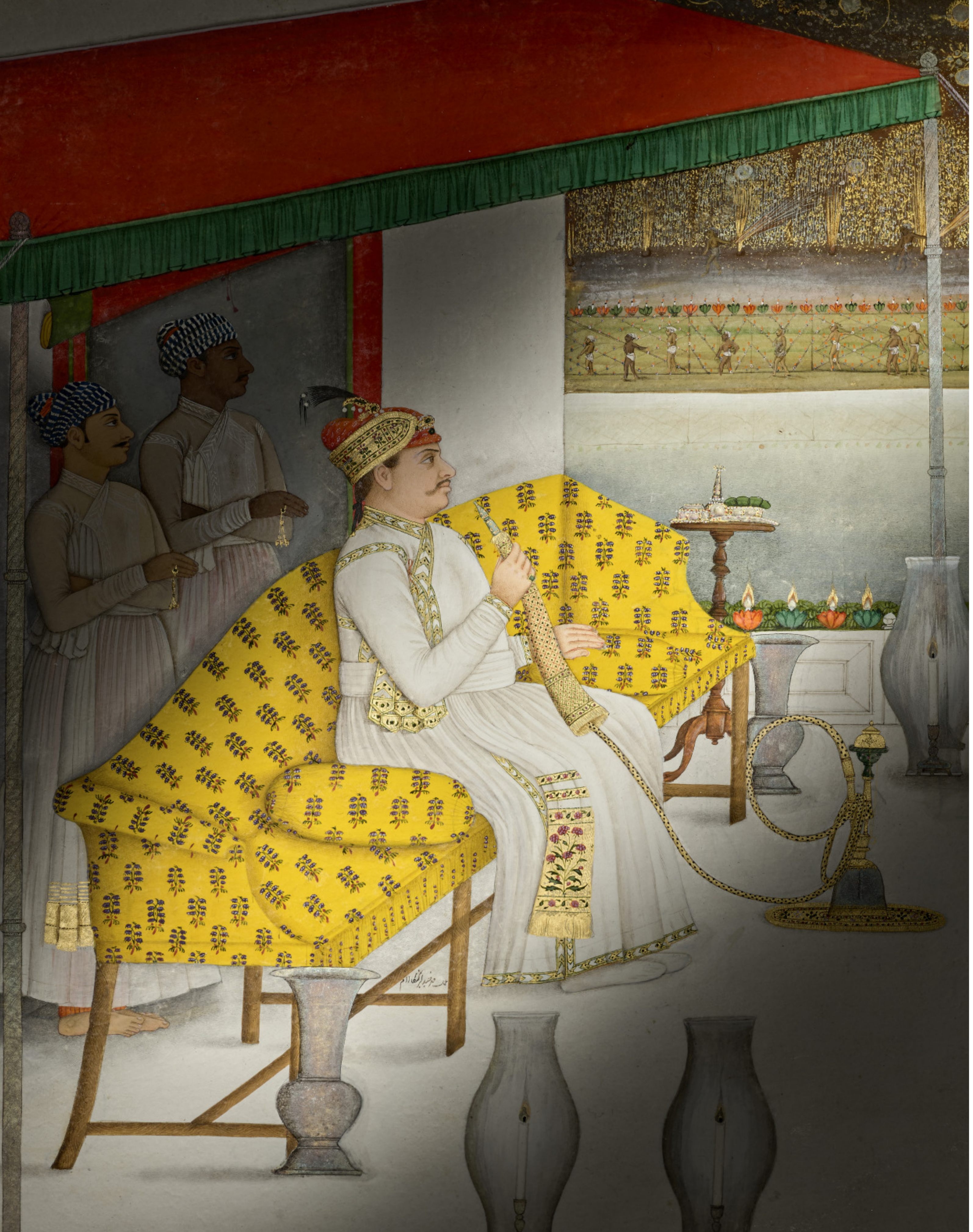
PROVENANCE:
Hobhouse Ltd., London, 1986

EXHIBITED:
Indian Painting during the British Period,
Hobhouse Ltd., London, 1986

LITERATURE:
P. Mason, *Indian Painting during the British Period*, Hobhouse Ltd., London, 1986, no.4
R. Skelton, *The Indian Heritage: Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule* , Exhibition Catalogue, London, 1982, p.51, no.92

Despite an apparent lack of urgency on the part of the attendant, the letter is most likely being delivered to Nawab Muhammad Riza Khan, Naib Nazim of Bengal between 1756 and 1775. A painting which is likely the pendant to ours depicting the Nawab seated on a lacquered wooden chair and smoking a *huqqa* is in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and was formerly in the collections of Robert Alderman and Dr Mark Zebrowski and Alvin O. Bellak (Acc.no. 2004-149-70; Skelton 1982, p.51, no. 92; Mason 2001, no.78, p.184). Of near identical size to the present paining, the Philadelphia painting shares the same sparse composition, cool grey palette and woven grass matted floor.





AN OPENING FOLIO OF A POLIER ALBUM

***51**

COLONEL POLIER'S *NAUTCH*

SIGNED BY MIHR CHAND, FAIZABAD, INDIA, PROBABLY 1774-75

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, signed by the artist beneath the sofa, laid down on navy blue and applied buff borders illuminated with silver and gold foliate motifs, verso with large gold and polychrome illuminated *shamsa*, in illuminated navy blue frame with colourful floral sprays, the white margins similarly decorated with floral sprays, in applied narrow navy-blue borders decorated with gold and silver flowering vine, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 11⅛in. (18.9 x 28.2cm.); folio 11¼ x 15½in. (28.7 x 39.4cm.)

£250,000-350,000
US$340,000-480,000
€290,000-400,000

PROVENANCE:

Colonel Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier (1741-95)
Howell and Stewart Bookseller, 295 Holborn, London, before 1834
Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), acquired from Howell and Stewart in 1834
Sotheby's London, *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, 27 November 1974, lot 723

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Wonders of a Golden Age, Rietberg Museum, Zurich, 1987
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

S.C. Welch, *Room for Wonder, Indian Painting during the British Period, 1760-1880,* New York, 1978, no.34, pp.84-5
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.79, pp.233-4
B. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987, no.106, pp. 212-3
M. Beach, *The New Cambridge History of India, 1:3, Mughal and Rajput Painting*, Cambridge, 1992, fig.173, p.222
J. Boye (ed.), *L'Extraordinaire Aventure de Benoit de Boigne aux Indes,* Musée d'art et d'histoire, Chambéry, 1996, p.73
P. Nevile, *Nautch Girls of India, Dancers, Singers, Playmates,* New Delhi, 1996, p.154
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.138, p.180-1
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.138, p. 180-1
W. Dalrymple, *White Mughals,* London, 2002, col.pl.3
P. Brugière and J. Bor, *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle,* Paris, 2003, p.169, fig.100
M. Alam and S. Alavi, *A European Experience of the Mughal Orient, The I'jaz-i Arsalani (Persian Letters, 1773-1779) of Antoine-Louis Polier*, Delhi, 2008, cover ill.
J. Losty, "Towards a New Naturalism, Portraiture in Murshidabad and Avadh, 1750-80", in B. Schmitz (ed.), *After the Great Mughals, Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th Century*, Marg, Mumbai, vol.53, No.4, June 2002, pp.51-4, fig.17
J. Kuntz, *Switzerland, How an Alpine pass became a country,* Geneva, 2008, p. 58
M. Roy, "Origins of the Late Mughal Painting Tradition in Awadh", in S. Markel and T. Gude (eds.), *The Art of Courtly Lucknow, India's Fabled City,* Los Angeles, 2010, fig.26, p.180
T. McInerny, "The patronage of Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh and the work and influence of his principal court artists", *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2019, p.72, fig.30
B. Veyrassat, *De l'attirance à l'expérience de l'Inde: un Vaudois à la marge du colonialisme anglais, Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier (1741–1795)*, Neuchatel, 2022, pp.107-108, fig.9
S. Chattopadhyay, *Small Spaces: Recasting the Architecture of Empire,* London, 2023, pp. 163-4, 358, pl. 17

INSCRIPTIONS:

The signature below the sofa reads, 'The work of Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram'

> "Were it not for the European sofa and three-legged table next to it, one might mistake the grandee in this picture for an Indian *nawab*. In fact the sitter is one of a group of Europeans who sought to immerse themselves in Indian culture in the 18th century"
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**

Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872) who acquired this painting in 1834

This outstanding painting of Colonel Polier watching a *nautch* is one of the most important and iconic images from late 18th century Mughal India. Signed by the artist Mihr Chand, it is flawlessly balanced and exquisitely detailed. It has been described by Malini Roy as the artist's finest painting and his most important work (Roy in Markel 2010, p.181; Roy 2009, p.117), while Cary Welch described it as one of Mihr Chand's outstanding pictures (Welch 1978, p.84). With the distinctive floral borders and illuminated *shamsa* on the reverse associated with the well-known Polier Albums, it has long been recognised as one of the most significant of all the folios from the albums he commissioned during his years in India.

THE PAINTING

The composition and exquisite details are worth exploring closely. Colonel Polier, wearing white Mughal-style garments embroidered with gold sits on a European-style couch upholstered in yellow cloth (probably silk), which is decorated with a repeating pattern of small flowering stems of green, red, blue and white. Mihr Chand has shown his attention to naturalistic detail in the pleated cloth on the fore-edge of the couch and the ends of the two cushions, as well as in the legs of the couch, in which the grain of the wood is clearly visible. Polier's turban is of orange-red with a gold band typical of Awadhi fashion of the period, with a jewelled *sarpech*, and he wears white socks, suggesting the retention of an element of European sartorial behaviour in his otherwise Mughal garments. He is smoking an ornate gold and silver *huqqa*, and the mouthpiece is clearly recognisable as being of pale green jade set with gemstones. Beside the couch is a European tripod table on which are silver vessels set with pearls and gems. Behind Polier are two male attendants with blue striped turbans and gold jewellery hanging from their fingers. In front of Polier are four tall candles encased in glass lamps. In the centre of the terrace two dancing girls dressed in pink and orange robes perform their *nautch*, and beyond them stand four musicians dressed in white with coloured turbans and sashes. On the upper edge of the terrace balustrade is a row of candles in lotus-form lamps set in a bed of green leaves. Beyond the terrace is a silvery lake, on the far bank of which a crowd of attendants have erected a wide frame hung with hundreds of candles and further lotus-forms lamps. The frame and lamps are reflected in the surface of the lake. Further into the distance, marshalled by further attendants, a pulsating fireworks display erupts into the sky, providing a brilliant contrast with the composed scene on the terrace.

The sense of depth of the terrace is emphasised by the use of perspective in the wall, awning and couch at the left, and the theatricality of the scene is enhanced by Mihr Chand's brilliant use of colour and shadow. The scene occurs at night, as shown by the dark skies in the distance, the exploding fireworks and the candles and lamps in the foreground, which bathe the white terrace in light, creating a stage-like setting. The two dancing girls stand out in their pink and red garments, while the musicians are dressed in white with flashes of colour in their turbans, waistband and musical instruments. The figures are framed by the strong yellow of the couch, the red of the awning and the dark brown of the background. The effect is powerful and dramatic. Maya Jasanoff described Polier as someone who "fashioned himself socially as a European orientalist while privately he lived as a Mughal nobleman, effecting his self-transformation partly through the collecting of art" (quoted in Markel 2010, p.33), and this painting is a perfect visual manifestation of this synchronism.

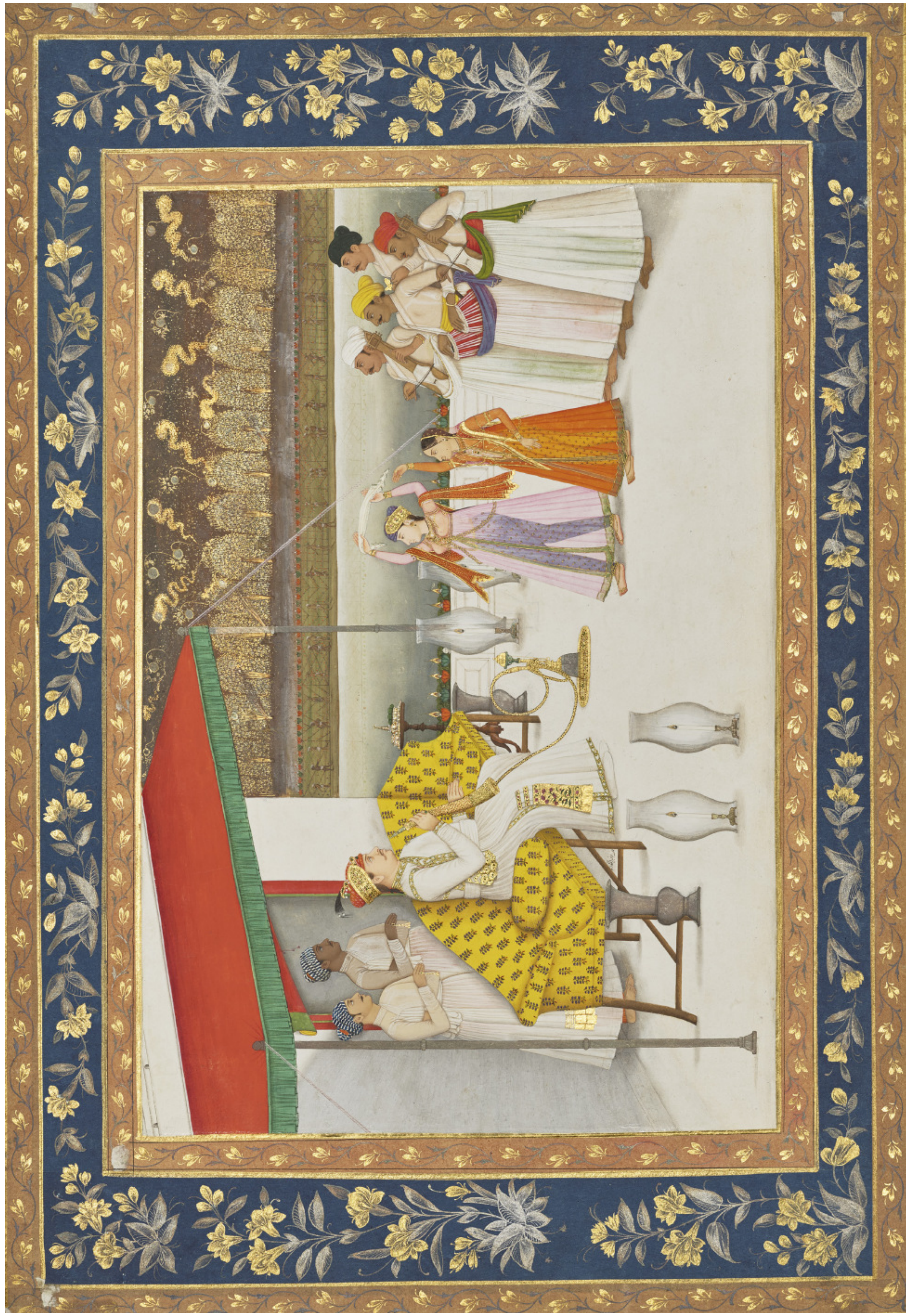
THE VERSO AND BORDERS

The reverse of the folio is decorated with a full page of illumination centred round a large sunburst medallion (*shamsa*), identifying this folio as a frontispiece to one of the albums commissioned by Polier from Mihr Chand and his studio (Roy 2024, p.191). The illumination is very close in style and form to the frontispieces on other Polier Albums, for example, those in the Berlin Museum (I. 4596, fol. 30v), the Victoria and Albert Museum (MSL/1858/4765), and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (1982.2.70.10). Unusually however, the central disc of the *shamsa* on the present folio is had been left blank, whereas in other examples there are inscriptions (see below for further details on the wider group of Polier Albums).

The borders are also typical of the Polier Albums. The borders surrounding the *nautch* scene consist of brown and blue margins decorated with scrolling floral tendrils and naturalistic sprays of flowers in gold and silver. The borders of the reverse are decorated with naturalistic polychrome stems of flowers on plain cream ground, with inner and outer bands of small gold and silver leafy tendrils. The large polychrome flowers on the reverse are closest to the style associated with border an painter dubbed artist C by Imbert (see Imbert in Weis 2024, pp.225-231).

POLIER, HIS PATRONAGE AND COLLECTING

Antoine-Louis-Henri Polier was born in Lausanne 1741 to a well-to-do family of French origin with a military and intellectual heritage and with connections to India. His uncle Paul-Phillipe Polier had served in India in the mid-18th century, and the younger Polier entered the service of the British East India Company as a surveyor, arriving in India in 1758. By 1762, he had become Chief Engineer of the Bengal Army in Calcutta and began working on the design and construction of the new Fort William, rising to the rank of major and being awarded command of the garrison. In 1773 he was posted to Awadh as a surveyor, working both for the East India Company and for Nawab Shuja al-Dawla (r. 1754-75), residing in Faizabad until 1775. Soon after the accession Nawab Asaf al-Dawla (r. 1775-97) in Awadh, Polier left Faizabad and moved temporarily to Delhi, offering his services to Emperor Shah Alam II. He returned to Awadh via Benares in 1780, and took up the post of chief architect and engineer to Nawab Asaf al-Dawla, residing in Lucknow. Apart from a brief interruption in late 1781, he remained there, with the honorary rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the East India Company, until he returned to Europe in 1788. Alam and Alavi described him as a "Persianate Mughal Noble" (Alam and Alavi, p.69). On his return to Europe he resided initially in Lausanne, later moving to France and settling near Avignon. In February 1795 tragedy struck when he was murdered by a band of robbers. For a full biography of Polier see Veyrassat 2022.



During his time in India, Polier collected a very large numbers of Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic manuscripts, Indian miniatures and calligraphies, and he possessed a complete collection of the Vedas. The paintings he acquired included earlier Mughal paintings as well as works commissioned by him from artists in Awadh, principally his favourite artist Mihr Chand, who was largely responsible for arranging the layout, decoration and binding of the albums into which the paintings were assembled.

Polier's letters in Persian contain a wealth of valuable and interesting information about his activities as a patron and collector (for a summary, see Alam and Alavi 2001, pp. 52-6). Among them are numerous letters to Mihr Chand, leaving no doubt that Mihr Chand was not only Polier's chief artist, but that he also had a supervisory role, akin to that of head of an atelier. The letters include detailed instructions to Mihr Chand on what paintings to work on, the employment of other artists, illuminators and binders, how to prepare and decorate the paper, the style and size of the albums and more (Alam and Alavi 2001 as indexed, Roy 2009). One particularly interesting and pertinent letter appears to relate directly to the present painting. On 9 Jumada I 1189 AH Polier, who was in Calcutta at the time meeting with officials of the East India Company, wrote to Mihr Chand in Faizabad saying "I have learnt from Mr Martin's letter that you are preparing a painting of the dance … prepare a draft of the painting of the dance. I will see the draft when I come back and then you can finalize it as per my instructions." (Alam and Alavi, pp.266-7; Roy gives the date of the letter as 9 Jumada I AH 1188 (18 July 1774), but the dates of Polier's letters preceding and following this one, which are in sequence, are dated 1189 AH).

A slightly later glimpse of such albums in Polier's home in Lucknow is found in the famous oil painting by John Zoffany "Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell" (ca.1786-7, Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, see Archer 1979, col. pl.VII). On the table beside Polier three albums and a manuscript are clearly visible, two of the albums lying open displaying Indian miniatures on the visible pages.

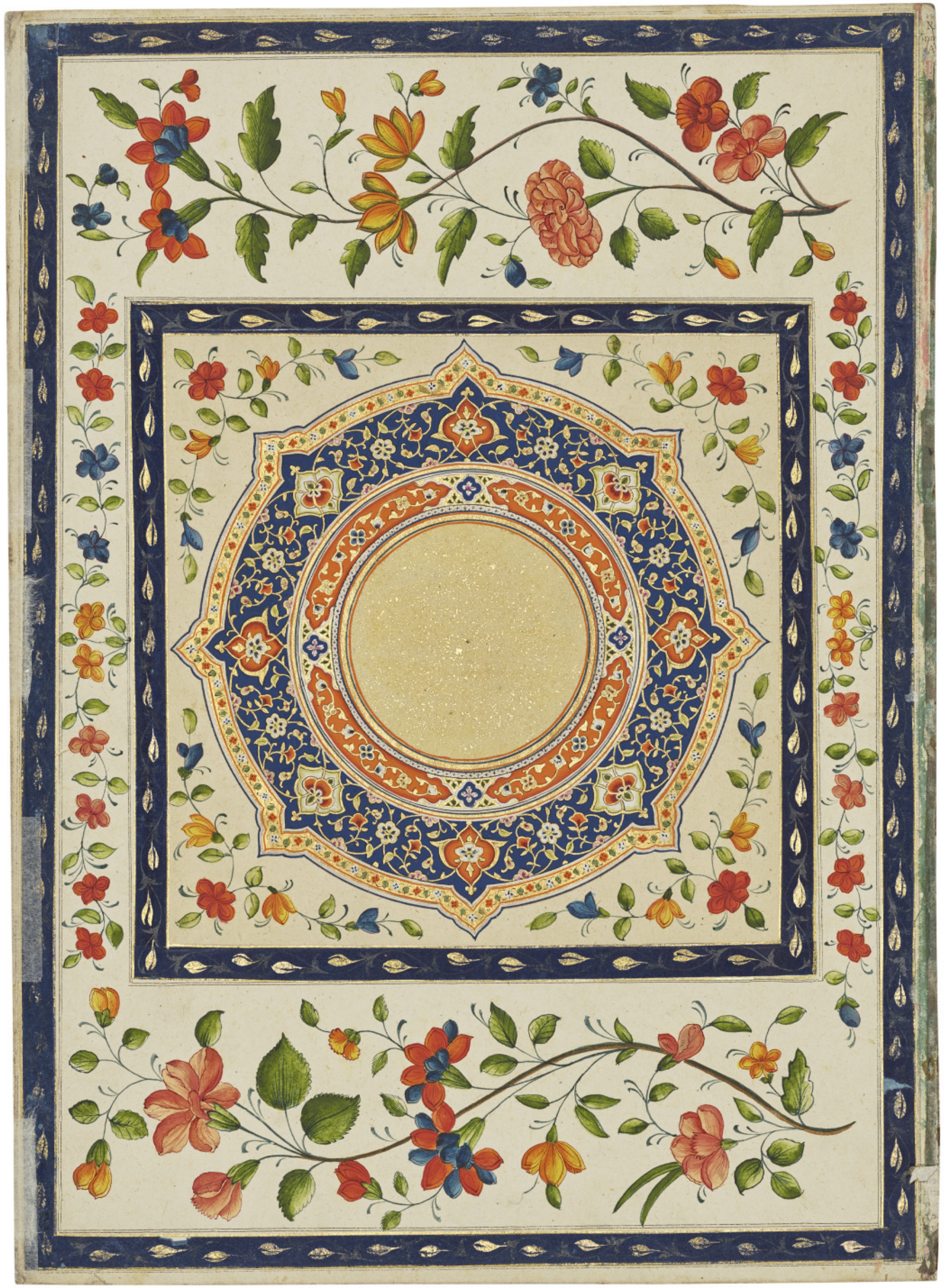
Polier was in the habit of gifting paintings and even whole albums to friends and colleagues (see Weis 2024, pp. 163-71). He purchased Mughal miniatures for Sir Philip Francis, a senior member of the East India Company in Bengal (Subrahmanyan 2000, p.54), while in one of his letters he explains that he has sent a "Moracka of fine Oriental writings" to Sir William Jones, the early Orientalist scholar. He had sent it through Warren Hastings, but Hastings had forgotten to send it on to Jones and as a result Polier sent another album to Jones and asked that Hastings keep the first album as a "small token of my gratitude & regard" (letter dated 15 July 1786, British Library, Add MS 29170, fol.129, quoted in Stronge 2019, p.140). Another example is the album presented by Polier to Lady Coote, the wife of his friend and supporter Sir Eyre Coote (of which seventeen pages are preserved in the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1982.2.70.1-16 and 1983.2.12). The majority of albums, however, returned with Polier to Europe in 1788. Many were subsequently acquired by the well-known English collector William Beckford. On Beckford's death these mostly passed to his daughter, the Duchess of Hamilton, and were acquired by the Berlin Museums at the 1882 auction of the Hamilton Palace Library. Others are in the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the John Rylands Library, Manchester University, the Wellcome Collection Library, London and the Asian Arts Museum of San Francisco. Parts of his manuscript collections are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and the Libraries of King's College, Cambridge and Eton College, held at Cambridge University Library. For the albums and paintings see Hickman and Enderlein 1979; von Gladiss 2010; Markel 2010; Stronge and Atighi-Moghadam 2018; Weis 2024.

MIHR CHAND THE ARTIST

Mihr Chand (fl.1750s-1780s) was a superlative artist – brilliantly skilled in a wide variety of styles and formidably adaptable, producing masterpieces in the classical Mughal style inherited from his father Ganga Ram (who was also an artist) and earlier generations of Mughal painters, as well as in the Europeanised approach favoured by some of his patrons. Malini Roy, who has studied Mihr Chand and his works in great detail, described him as "exceptionally skilled in portraiture" (Losty and Roy 2012, p.168) and suggested that "it was Mihr Chand's thirst for new knowledge that prompted the artist to evaluate the visual resources available and assimilate these new techniques within his works." (Roy 2009, p.3). Terence McInerney wrote "The great artist Mihr Chand embodies the delicious schizophrenia of the Faizabad years. He made skilful copies of Tilly Kettle's paintings, as well as eighteenth-century, high-style Mughal works that would have been admired by Chitarman II" (McInerney 2019, p.98). Mihr Chand was highly innovative and had great originality and enormous range. He produced portraits, group scenes, equestrian portraits, and architectural and topographical views, mastering one-point perspective as well as other new concepts. He worked for several patrons, including Prince Ali Gawhar/Shah Alam II, Shuja al-Dawla and Polier, and spent most of his career in Delhi, Allahabad and Faizabad. For the most detailed study of Mihr Chand see Roy 2009; see also Markel 2010, as indexed; Weis 2024, as indexed.

THE LATER PROVENANCE

The present folio was acquired from the London booksellers Howell and Stuart in 1834 by the great 19th century antiquarian and bibliophile Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), who is recognised as one of the greatest European collectors of manuscripts and books. He was educated at Rugby School and Oxford University and was an avid collector from an early age, amassing over 60,000 manuscripts and 40,000 printed books during his lifetime, a collection covering all cultures and historical periods. Towards the end of his life he was in negotiations to transfer his collection to national ownership, but at his death in 1872 these had not concluded. The subsequent dispersal of his collection took nearly 100 years, from the late 1880s to the late 1970s. The sale in which the present folio appeared was one of the last, held in late 1974 (*Biblitheca Phillippica, Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts, Indian and Persian Miniatures*, Sotheby's, London, 27 November 1974, lot 723). For further information on Sir Thomas Phillipps and his collection see Munby 1951-60; Munby 1967; DNB, DWB.



Reverse

*52

COLONEL POLIER WATCHING A *NAUTCH*

BY AN INDIAN ARTIST IN THE STYLE OF JOHN ZOFFANY, LUCKNOW, INDIA, CIRCA 1784-88

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
13⅛ x 11⅝in. (33.2 x 29.6cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Sotheby's London, *Oriental Miniatures and Manuscripts*, 2 July 1984, lot 187
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1984

EXHIBITED:
La Route des Indes, Les Indes et l'Europe, Échanges Artistiques et Heritage Commun 1650-1850, Musée d'Aquitaine et Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Bordeaux, 1998-1999

LITERATURE:
La Route des Indes, Les Indes et l'Europe, Échanges Artistiques et Heritage Commun 1650-1850, Bordeaux, 1998, cat.100, pp.130-131
J-M. Lafont, "Delhi Under Shah Alam II and the French", in W. Dalrymple and Y. Sharma (eds.), *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi*, 1707-1857, New York, New Haven and London, 2012, fig.3, p.26

This striking and important painting of Colonel Polier watching a *nautch* represents on many levels the dynamic context of art, culture, society, politics and patronage that existed in India in the late 18th century, especially in Awadh. It was painted for a European patron by an Indian artist after a composition by a European artist, probably John Zoffany, and the dancer pictured may be Khanum Jan, who was famous among Mughals and Europeans in Lucknow at the time and whose songs formed the basis of William Hamilton Bird's *Oriental Miscellany*, published in Calcutta in 1789.

THE PAINTING AND DETAILS

Colonel Polier is shown reclining on cushions in a spacious room open to a large courtyard. He wears white robes, a gold coat, and a red turban with gold band, in the aristocratic Mughal style of Lucknow at the time. A *huqqa* with a coiled pipe is to his left. In front of him a female dancer (possibly Khanum Jan, see below) dressed in elegant robes and a similar turban performs a *nautch*, while a similarly dressed companion claps the rhythm. A second companion, in green robes, stands with them. Sitting cross-legged on the floor are four female musicians, one playing the drums, two playing stringed instruments, and the fourth playing castanets. In the background at left two woman stand watching, one holding a gold and white *huqqa* cup, the other pushing back an orange-red curtain that hangs down behind an arch. Near them a male attendant carries a silver tray and vessel, possibly a *pan* box. In the courtyard beyond the ornately carved arches is a tree, a fountain and two buildings, and in the partly cloudy sky is a flight of five birds.

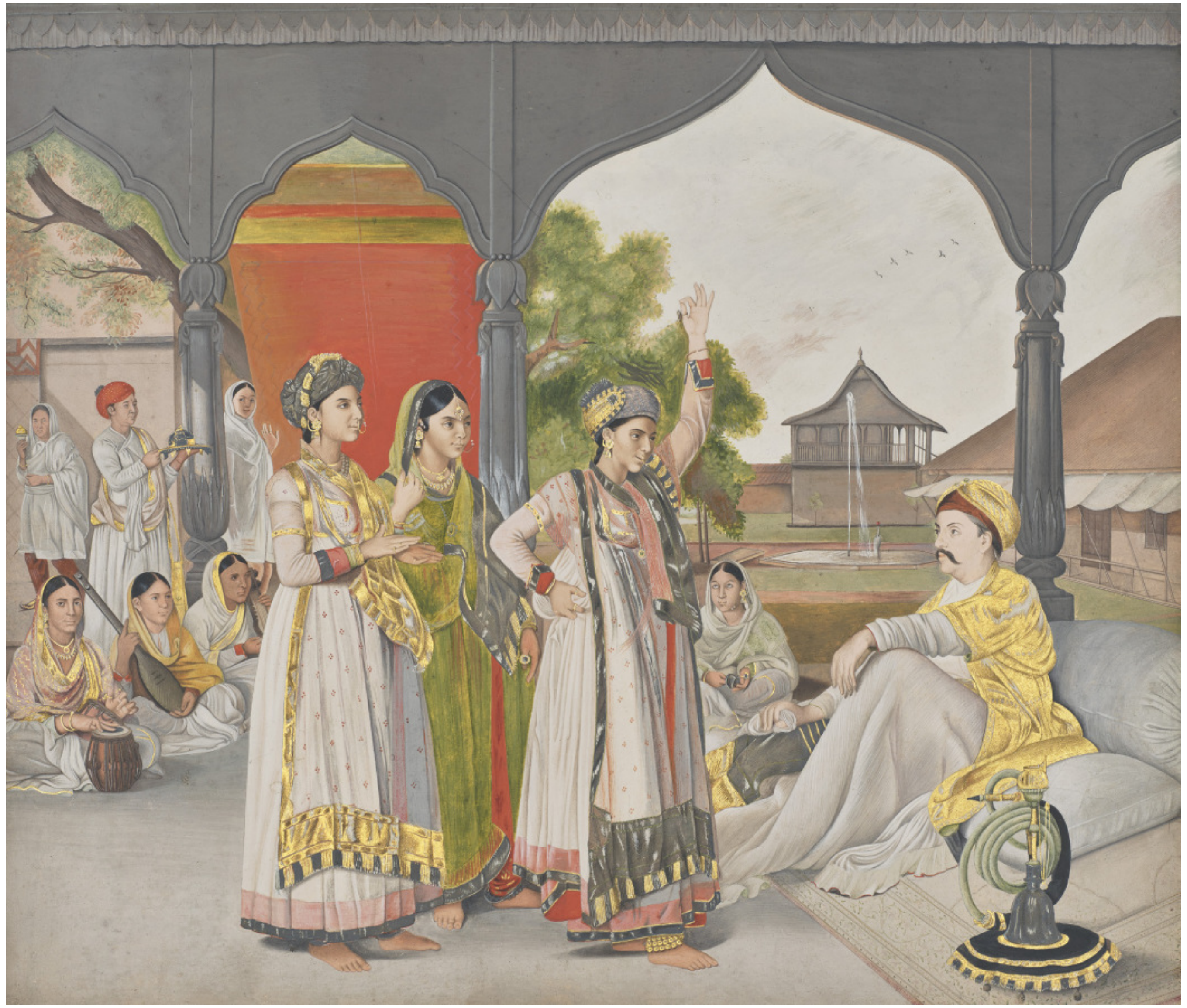
Despite clearly being based on a painting by a European artist, probably the British portraitist John Zoffany (see below), the Indian painter has made it very much his own artistic production, particularly through the palette and meticulous details, which are minutely observed and reward close observation. These include the robes and jewellery of the dancer and musicians, the delicate chevron design on the long-necked stringed instrument, the realistic movement of the drum-player's fingers and the almost invisible sarus crane standing in the fountain in the courtyard. An interesting element is the fragment of textile visible at the far left hanging over the wall, which has a distinctive chevron design in the borders. An extremely similar textile forms the main backdrop in lot 53 in this sale, the splendid portrait of John Wombwell, and similar textiles also appear in the well-known oil painting by John Zoffany of *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell* (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, see, e.g. Dalrymple 2020, p.29, fig.11). Mary Webster remarked that this type of cloth was peculiar to Lucknow (Webster 2011, p.520).

THE SOURCE AND THE COMPANION PAINTINGS

Another version of the present scene is in the Rietberg Museum, Zurich (2005.83), formerly in the Archer Collection and sold in these rooms 23 September 2005, lot 47. It is identical in almost every way and the painted area is of the same size. The only noticeable differences are the slightly altered headdresses of the dancer and her first companion, and the presence here of a flight of birds in the sky.

It had long been suggested that the source painting on which the Archer/Rietberg example was based was by Tilly Kettle, an English artist who was active in India between 1769 and 1776, including two years in Faizabad between late 1771 and 1773, where Polier also lived from 1773 to 1775 (see Welch 1978, no.36, pp.88-9; Archer 1979, p.85, fig.39; Skelton 1982, p.51, no.90; and later, McInerney 2019, p.72, fig.31). As a result, when the present painting was sold at auction in 1984, the cataloguer followed the attribution of the scholars who had previously opined on the Archer/Rietberg version (Sotheby's, London, 2 July 1984, lot 187). However, in the discussion of the same painting in the Christie's catalogue of 23 September 2005, lot 47, it was pointed out that, according to the recorded dates of Tilly Kettle's departure from Faizabad in early 1773 and Polier's arrival later in the same year, they did not overlap, and thus it was not possible for Tilly Kettle to have painted this scene of Polier. While some of the paintings in the Polier Albums are based on works by Tilly Kettle, as are some in the albums of his friend Colonel Jean-Baptiste Gentil (1726-1799), such as a group portrait of *Shuja al-Dawla with his ten sons*, these were based on oil portraits that Kettle had painted for Shuja al-Dawla himself while in Faizabad and which had entered the nawab's collection. Artists working for Polier and Gentil were later given access to these oil portraits in order to copy their own versions (Weis 2024, p.148).

The Christie's catalogue entry in 2005 therefore suggested that the Archer/Rietberg version was datable to the 1780s (a dating followed by the Rietberg Museum on their website) and went on to suggest that the artist responsible for the original was John Zoffany (1733-1810), another English artist, active in India between 1783 and 1789, and that Zoffany's version was painted ca. 1785, at which time Polier was living in Lucknow. Zoffany is known to have worked for Polier while in Lucknow, for a well-known oil painting by him of ca.1786-87 depicts *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell* (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, see, e.g. Dalrymple 2020, p.29, fig.11). Citing stylistic similarities between the Archer/Rietberg version



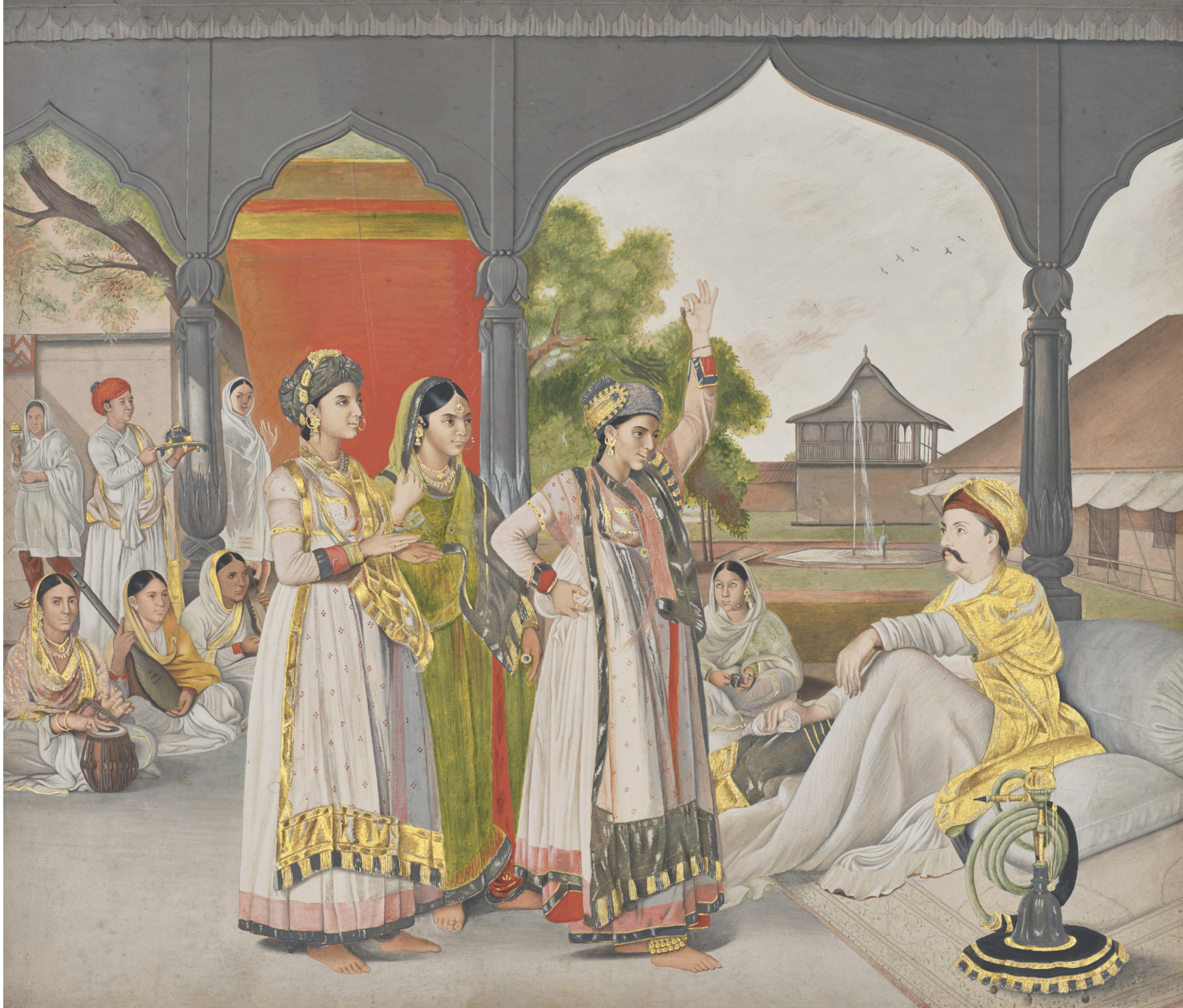
and paintings by Zoffany, especially *The Impey Family* of 1783, it was argued by Christie's cataloguer that the source was probably a now-lost oil painting by Zoffany. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones concurred with this reasoning (see Llewellyn-Jones in Markel 2010, p.67). Since the present painting is so close to the Archer/Rietberg version, both stylistically and in terms of the identical composition, the same arguments apply equally here. A further feature worth mentioning is that Polier's face, and especially his moustache, in the present painting and the Archer/Rietberg version are very similar to his face and moustache in the Zoffany painting of *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell* of 1886-7. For detailed information on Zoffany in India, see Webster 2011, pp.444-547).

Katherine Butler Schofield has recently suggested that the dancer pictured is Khanum Jan, a famous performer in Lucknow whose songs were written down by Sophia Plowden, wife of an East India Company officer, while she was in Lucknow in the late 1780s (Butler Schofield 2024, ch.4, and fig.4.4; the album itself is in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, MS 280). These songs were then converted into harmonised arrangements for the harpsichord and published by William Hamilton Bird in his famous *Oriental Miscellany*, published in Calcutta in 1789. Khanum Jan performed her dances in the houses of many Europeans in Lucknow, among whom she was very popular, and Sophia Plowden engaged John Zoffany to paint a portrait of Khanum Jan (Butler Schofield 2024, p.99). Sophia Plowden recorded that Zoffany also produced paintings of Khanum Jan for other Europeans (ibid). It is thus quite plausible that the dancer pictured here is Khanum Jan.

An interesting account of a nautch at Polier's house is given in the records of the English artist Ozias Humphry, who was in Lucknow for several months in 1786: "I saw for the first time a Nautch .... The grace and attitudes of his principal dancer were exquisitely beautiful surpassing all things of the kind I have ever seen ... I was seated with Col. Polier upon a sofa, to whom the dancers addressed their songs of love..." (quoted in Archer 1979, p.196).

In his years in Lucknow, Polier was very active in assembling albums and commissioning paintings from his Indian artists, as he had been when in Faizabad and Delhi (see lot 51). He had retained the services of the artist Mihr Chand (and possibly Dulichand and others) since his Faizabad years, and his albums datable to the 1780s include versions by his Indian artists of Zoffany's paintings, e.g. a portrait of Prince Mirza Javan Bakht (see Weis 2024, pp.159-60). Although it is not known which artist was responsible for the present painting, two other works rendered in a similar style and also probably based on source compositions by European artists are worth comparing. One is *Noblewomen playing chess*, in the Musée Guimet, Paris (A. 12112, see Markel 2010, p.49, no.186), the other is *Two Nautch girls dancing the Kuharwa* in a private collection (see *ibid*, p.48, no.187). Both have been dated between 1780 and 1800 and attributed to Nevasi Lal, although without giving reasons. A third work that also bears some stylistic resemblance to the present painting and the Archer/Rietberg version was illustrated in Patnaik 1985, cat. 15, pp.72,181, where it was also attributed to Nevasi Lal, although again without giving reasons (Roy and Stronge have suggested caution in assigning paintings to Nevasi Lal on stylistic grounds, especially as nothing is recorded of him after 1775, see Roy 2009, p.94, Stronge in Weis 2024, p.118, fn.4). One of the difficulties of attributing works of this type is that in copying the works of artists such as Kettle and Zoffany, these supremely skilled and adaptable Indian artists consciously departed from their normal styles of painting (Goswamy and Fischer 1987, p.214; Roy 2009, pp.95-6).

Nevertheless, one of the few definitive works by Nevasi Lal, a portrait of Shuja al-Dawla with his sons, after Tilly Kettle, certainly bears considerable stylistic resemblance to the present work (Musée Guimet, Paris, N33571). For further information on Polier and his collection and dance performances, see lot 51 in this sale.



*53

PORTRAIT OF JOHN WOMBWELL IN INDIAN DRESS

CIRCLE OF MIHR CHAND, LUCKNOW, INDIA, CIRCA 1785

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper, within buff border and bright orange margins with blue and white rules, reverse with later and incorrect identification inscription, plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 11⅝ x 8½in. (29.5 x 21.5cm.); folio 15¾ x 11¾in. (39.2 x 30cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

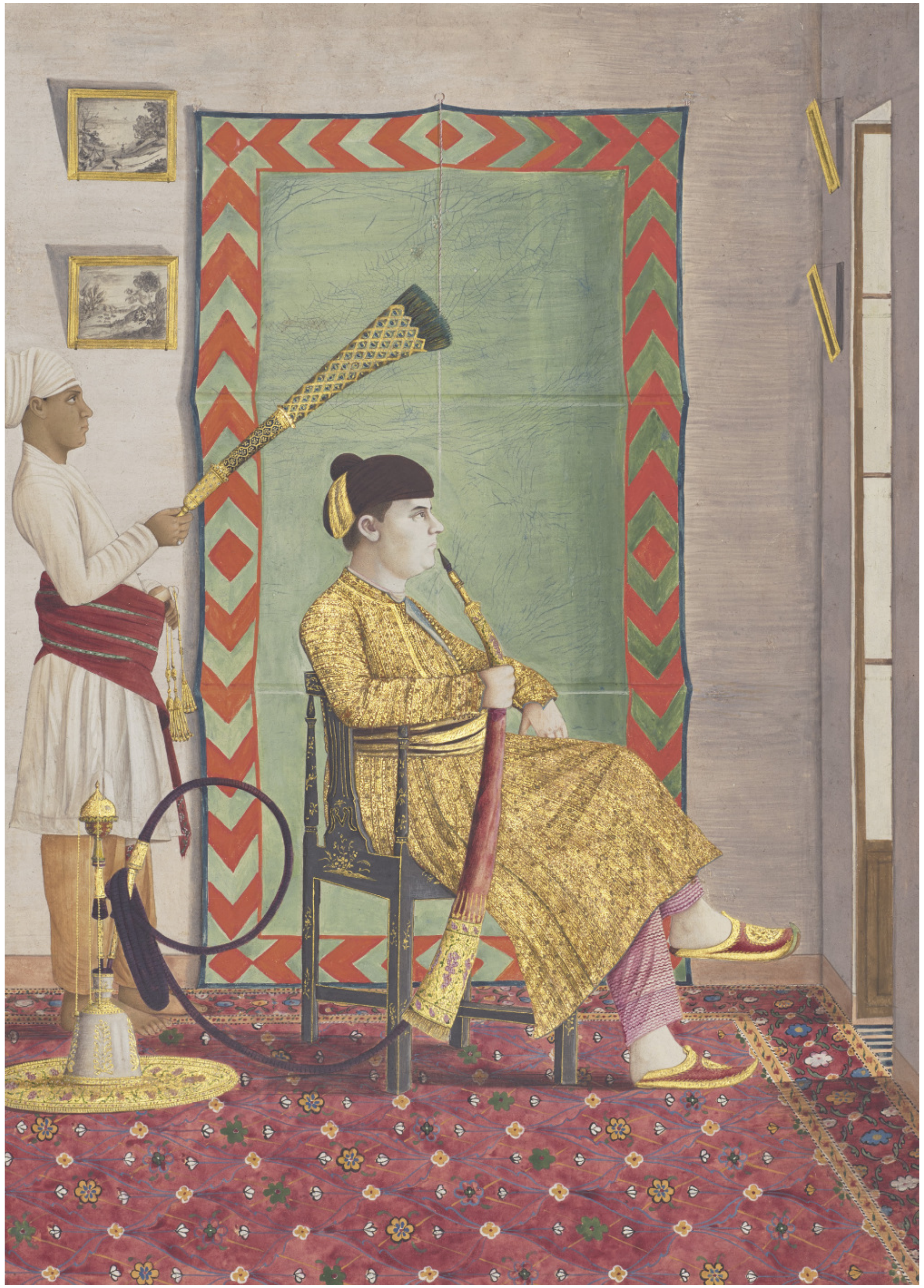
Dr W.B. Manley (1885-1972)
Sotheby's London, *Indian Miniatures, The Collection of Dr. W.B. Manley*, 14 July 1971, lot 120
Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd, London

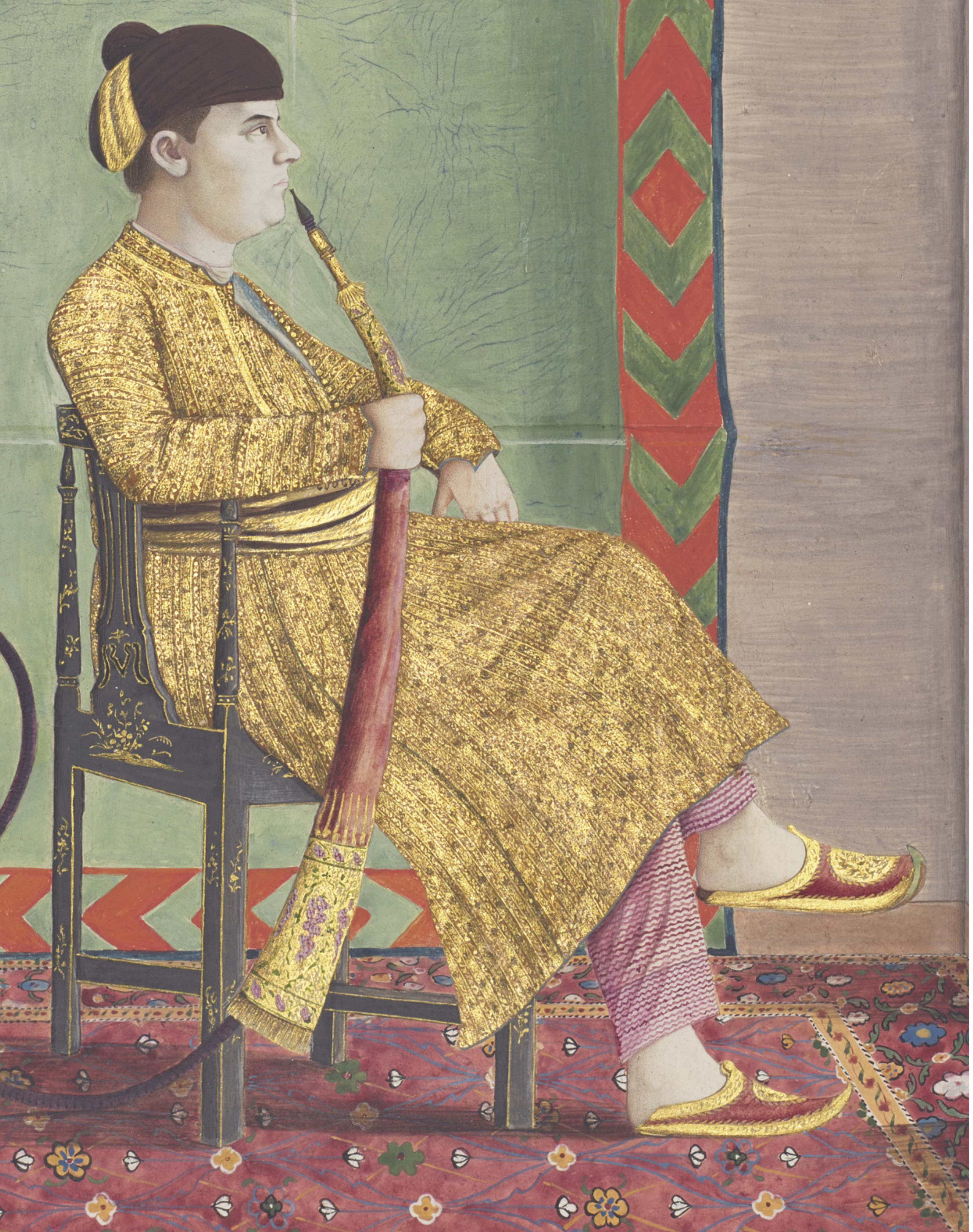
EXHIBITED:

Room for Wonder, Indian Painting During the British Period, 1760-1880, American Federation for the Arts, New York, 1978
La Route des Indes, Les Indes et l'Europe, Échanges Artistiques et Heritage Commun 1650-1850, Musée d'Aquitaine et Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Bordeaux, 1998-1999

LITERATURE:

F. Watson, *A Concise History of India*, London, 1974, reprinted 1979 and 1985, fig.144, p.137
S.C. Welch, *Room for Wonder, Indian Painting During the British Period, 1760-1880,* New York, 1978, no.37, pp.90-91
La Route des Indes, Les Indes et l'Europe, Échanges Artistiques et Heritage Commun 1650-1850, Bordeaux, 1998, cat.101, pp.130-131
W. Dalrymple, *White Mughals*, London, 2002, fig.3
J. Losty, "Towards a New Naturalism, Portraiture in Murshidabad and Avadh, 1750-80", in B. Schmitz (ed.), *After the Great Mughals, Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th Century,* Marg, Mumbai, vol.53, No.4, June 2002, pp.52-4, fig.16
P. Nevile, *Stories from the Raj, Sahibs, Memsahibs and Others*, New Delhi, 2004, p.157
K. Arpen, M*aking History: The Constructions of Johann Zoffany's 'Colonel Antoine Polier, Claud Martin and John Wombwell with the Artist' (1786-7)*, MA thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007, fig. 6, p . 42
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School*, Gurgaon, 2007, pl.1





This magnificent and meticulously observed painting of John Wombwell was described by Jeremiah Losty as "Perhaps the most impressive portrait of the Avadh school, which carries into perfect practice the newly discovered necessity of making the sitter appear to exist in a totally naturalistic space" (Losty 2002, p.53). Like lots 51 and 52, it perfectly embodies the fascinating period in late 18th century Awadh when Mughal art, culture and courtly society interacted dynamically with the interests, artistic tastes and patronage of European residents to produce a distinctive and captivating aesthetic vision.

Losty eloquently described this important painting in an essay in 2002: "Seated on a 'Burgomaster' chair and smoking a *huqqa*, [Wombwell] gazes pensively out of an open door, while behind him an attendant waves a *morchhal*. The painting is remarkable not only for the physical presence of the two figures but also for the minutely and beautifully observed space in which they inhabit. The room has plastered walls on which hang a greenish textile, with dramatic red and white chevron borders, and four pictures, with a red millefleur carpet underfoot. … The green hanging defines the contours of the sitter while its perfectly suggested distance behind him defines his physical presence. The light from the right through the open door falls brilliantly on Wombwell's face, and casts shadows behind him, while the back wall with its hanging and pictures is seen as moving from the shade to the light in reverse direction. Although at first sight Wombwell's is a pure profile portrait, this is not in fact so. His chair is slightly at an angle to the picture plane, so that his body can be painted in the traditional Mughal viewpoint, even though his far shoulder is scarcely visible and hence more realistically observed than tradition would dictate. His right leg crossed over his left brilliantly parallels the profiled face." (Losty 2002, pp.52-4).

To this informative description might be added a close examination of the brilliantly observed details. These include the delicate gold stripes of embroidery on Wombwell's robe, the thin red zigzag bands on his trousers, the gold embroidery on the shoes, and the embroidered gold silk on the *huqqa* pipe, the gold designs on the European-style chair, the gold and enamel decoration and gold chains on the *huqqa* bottle, stem and cup, the jade-hilted dagger with gold-embroidered tassles in the attendant's waistband and the beautifully decorated peacock feather *morchal*, and even such details as the hooks and loops from which the large textile hangs. The carpet appears to be a Deccani lattice carpet of the period, a type exported across India and abroad. Finally, the monochrome landscape paintings on the walls are clearly European in style. Wombwell's pale face is skilfully modelled, giving a remarkable sense of plasticity, and the strong colours are brilliantly balanced.

The same type of distinctive bold textile with chevron borders appears in the background of lot 52 in this sale (*Colonel Polier watching a nautch*) as well as in the well-known oil painting by John Zoffany of *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell* (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, see, e.g. Dalrymple 2020, p.29, fig.11). Mary Webster remarked that this type of cloth was peculiar to Lucknow (Webster 2011, p.520).

The artist responsible for this arresting portrait has not been identified, but Wombwell was one of a number of European residents in Lucknow who were interested in art and had themselves painted by Indian artists and visiting European painters. Another striking portrait of Wombwell in Indian dress, this time seated on a terrace by a river, is in the Fritz Lugt Collection, Institut Neerlandais, Paris, 1970-T.36 (see Markel 2010 p.230, fig.35; Paris 1986, no.51, pl.VI), and he appears in two well-known oil paintings by John Zoffany: *Colonel Mordaunt's cock-fight* of 1784-88 (Tate Gallery, London, T06856, see Webster 2011, pp.505-7) and *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell* (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, see Webster 2011, p.520). Cary Welch suggested that the present work and the portrait of Wombwell on a terrace in the Fritz Lugt Collection were painted by the same artist, and associated them with the style of Mihr Chand, an artist described by Malini Roy as "exceptionally skilled in portraiture" (Losty and Roy 2012, p. 168). Mihr Chand was the chief painter of Col. Antoine Polier for over a decade and probably worked for other European patrons, especially after 1785, when Polier began to wind up his affairs in preparation for his return to Europe (Roy 2009, p.110). Certainly the present portrait has the startling clarity of vision and execution associated with Mihr Chand, as well as the masterful composition and use of colour, and the subtle and convincing depth and plasticity. John Wombwell was a friend of Polier's and would have seen some of the paintings that Mihr Chand had produced for Polier. Indeed, in Zoffany's oil painting of *Colonel Polier with his friends Claude Martin and John Wombwell*, the activity is centred around inspecting and discussing paintings: not only is Wombwell inspecting a watercolour, but three of Polier's albums of Indian miniatures lie open on the table. A drawing by Ozias Humphry of 1786, another English artist in Lucknow, depicts a *View from John Wombwell's house across the River Gumti* and another by the same artist depicts Wombwell's footman (Archer 1979, pp.197-8, figs.121-2).

John Wombwell was born in 1748 and came from a Yorkshire family. His uncle Sir George Wombwell (1734-1780) had been chairman of the East India Company and was MP for Huntingdon between 1774 and 1780. John followed his uncle into the East India Company and arrived in India in 1776. He was appointed by Warren Hastings as Paymaster and Auditor-General of the nawab's army and financial controller of the Lucknow Residency, arriving in Lucknow in 1785 (Webster 2011, pp.522-3; Losty 2019, p.62). He was friends with many of the other prominent Europeans in Awadh at the time, including Polier, Claude Martin, and Col. Mordaunt, as well as the artists John Zoffany and Ozias Humphry.

Dr W. B. Manley (1885-1972), who owned this work in the mid-20th century, was a major collector of Indian miniatures. His interest in Indian paintings began when he served in India between 1905 and 1924. On his return to England he became a barrister and later a doctor. He gathered a very significant collection, lending pieces to the 1947 exhibition of Indian art at the Royal Academy. The well-known Manley *Ragamala* is in the British Museum (1973,0917,0.1-56). Much of his collection was dispersed at auction in 1971, the sale comprising nearly 500 individual miniatures in 300 lots (Sotheby's, London, 14 July 1971).

*54

COLONEL SKINNER'S *NAUTCH* TROUPE PERFORMING IN A COLLONADED INTERIOR

DELHI, INDIA, 1830-40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within broad gold borders and polychrome rules, the margins plain, reverse plain with pencilled inscription, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5¼ x 8¼in. (13.5 x 20.8cm.); folio 7⅜ x 10⅛in. (18.6 x 25.6cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:

Colonel James Skinner (1778-1841)
Maggs Bros, London, *Oriental Miniatures & Illumination,* February, 1965, No.85 ("From the collection of Col. James Skinner").
Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008), Cambridge, MA, before 1972
Sotheby's London, *Fine Indian and Persian Miniatures and Manuscripts, from the Collection of Cary Welch*, 12 December 1972, lot 10
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

EXHIBITED:

Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siecle, Musée de la Musique, Paris, 2003

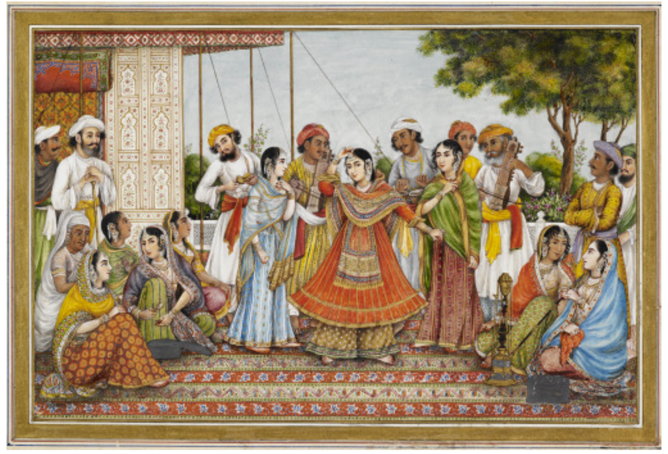
LITERATURE:

S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.142, p.183
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.142, p.183
P. Brugière and J. Bor, *Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle,* Paris, 2003, fig.74, p.138
P. Nevile, *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School,* Gurgaon, 2007, pl.91, pp.114-15 and inside covers

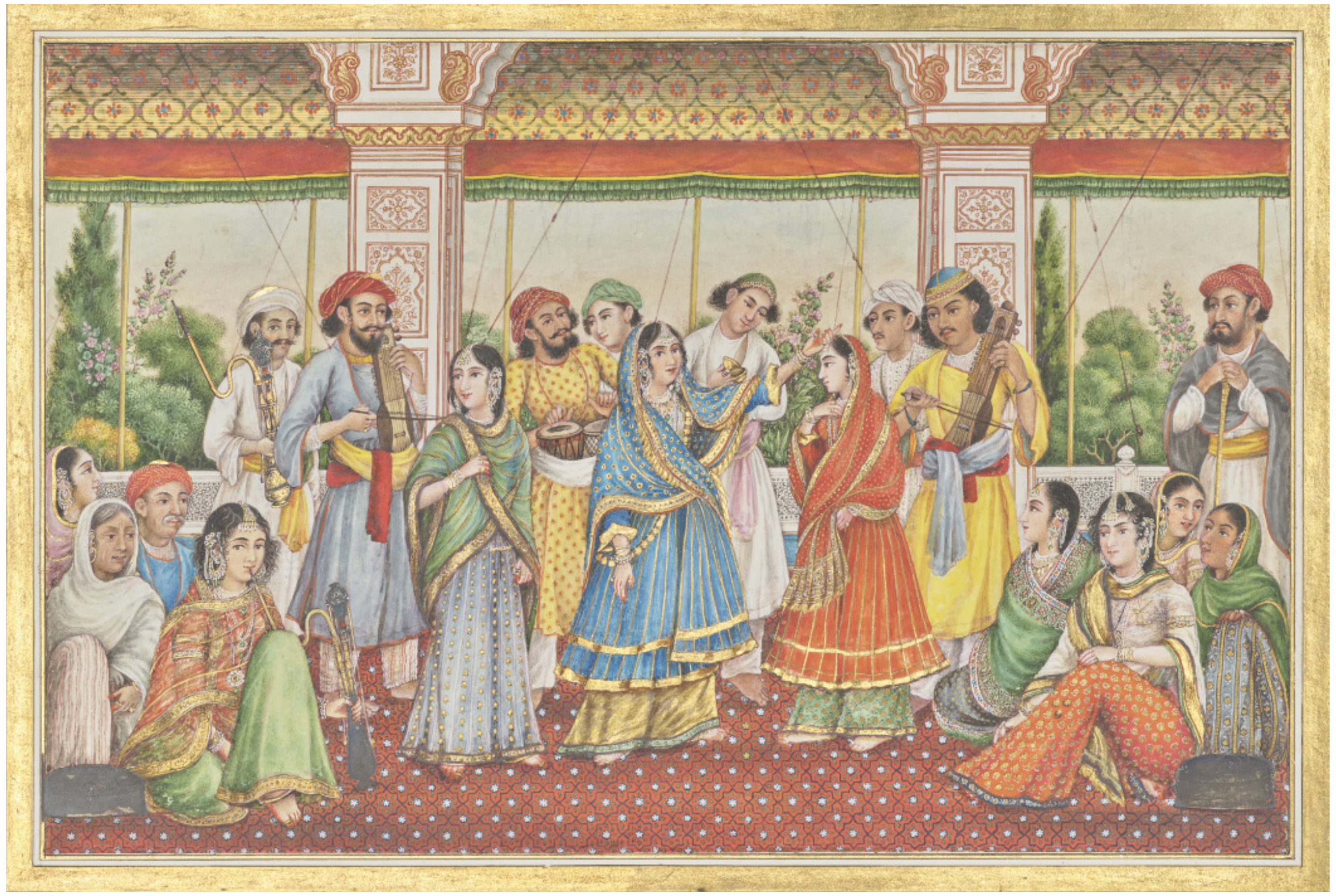
The history of this painting is elucidated by a pencilled note on the reverse. It states that it was originally accompanied by a second picture, inscribed on the back: 'A Nautch at Col. Skinner's given to me by himself 1838'. The note adds that the second picture was in the India Office Library, the collection of which has since moved to the British Library (acc.no.Add.Or.2598, illustrated). The two paintings are of a similarly high quality: small details like the marble *jali* wall behind the dancers are meticulous in their detail. They are also executed with similar pigments, including a silver paint used for some of the vessels on the floor, which in both paintings have tarnished. Finally, both paintings are set within broad gold borders framed by white rules. Though some of the musicians and dancers are obviously different, some - such as the figure in the foreground - may well be the same person: unfortunately, the names of the members of Skinner's *nautch* troupe do not seem to have been recorded.

Emily Eden said of Colonel James Skinner (1778-1841) that 'he was one of those people whose lives ought to be written about for the particular amusement of later generations' (Eden 1866, p.96). Skinner was the son of a Rajput mother, and because of this was banned from being an officer in the East India Company's army. Consequently he joined the Marathas, where he attained high rank while fighting the British, before switching sides to lead an irregular cavalry force for the East India Company. He was granted the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in 1815 and began to live the genteel life of the Anglo-Indian elite: he set up a farm on his estate in Haryana, a painting of which by Ghulam Ali Khan is in the National Army Museum, London (acc.no.NAM.1956-02-27-1). He wrote several books, including a monograph about the Caste system (*Kitab-i tasrih al-aqvam)* and a collection of the histories of the princely families of the North of India (*Tadhkirat al-umara'*). Emily Eden further notes that he became a patron of architecture, as well as something of a religious chameleon: 'he built this church, which is a very curious building [...] and within sight of it there is a mosque which he has also built, because he said that one way or the other he should be sure to go to heaven' (Eden 1866, p.96).

In 1815, Skinner became acquainted with the Fraser brothers on a military expedition in Nepal: in his account of the campaign, James Fraser recorded Skinner as a 'very meritous and brave officer' (Fraser 1820, p.101). So close was his friendship with William Fraser that they were buried side by side in Skinner's church in Delhi. It may have been William who inspired Skinner to become a patron of the arts (Sims-Williams 2014). Consequently, three of the known copies of his *Tazkirat al-Umara* are illustrated with portraits of Indian princes: these are the manuscripts in the British Library (acc.no.Add.27254), one in the Chester Beatty Library (acc.no.MS.33), and another sold in these Rooms, 16 July 2014, lot 39, since published by Bernard Quaritch (McBurney 2014). Though some portraits are in a traditional Mughal style, depicting their standing subjects in profile, some show them more naturalistically in interiors in a manner highly reminiscent of this painting. The trees in the background of this scene are very similar to those in the background of the painting of Thakur Bhup Singh of Daki in the Quaritch manuscript (McBurney, fig.13). A similar white marble *jali* also appears in the depiction of Balwant Singh of Bharatpur in the same manuscript (McBurney, fig.39). The similarities between the two suggest that a regular group of artists, trained in the Delhi style, executed Skinner's artistic commissions for him; as well as a dance troupe, he retained his own *atelier*. See the following lot for a further discussion of Skinner's patronage.



Colonel Skinner's *Nautch* troupe performing on a terrace, British Library, London, Add. Or.2598



***55**

COLONEL SKINNER'S *NAUTCH* TROUPE PERFORMING ON AN OUTDOOR TERRACE

DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1830-40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on card, set within gold and black borders, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 6⅛ x 9in. (15.5 x 22.8cm.); folio 7½ x 10¼in. (19.1 x 26.2cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1980

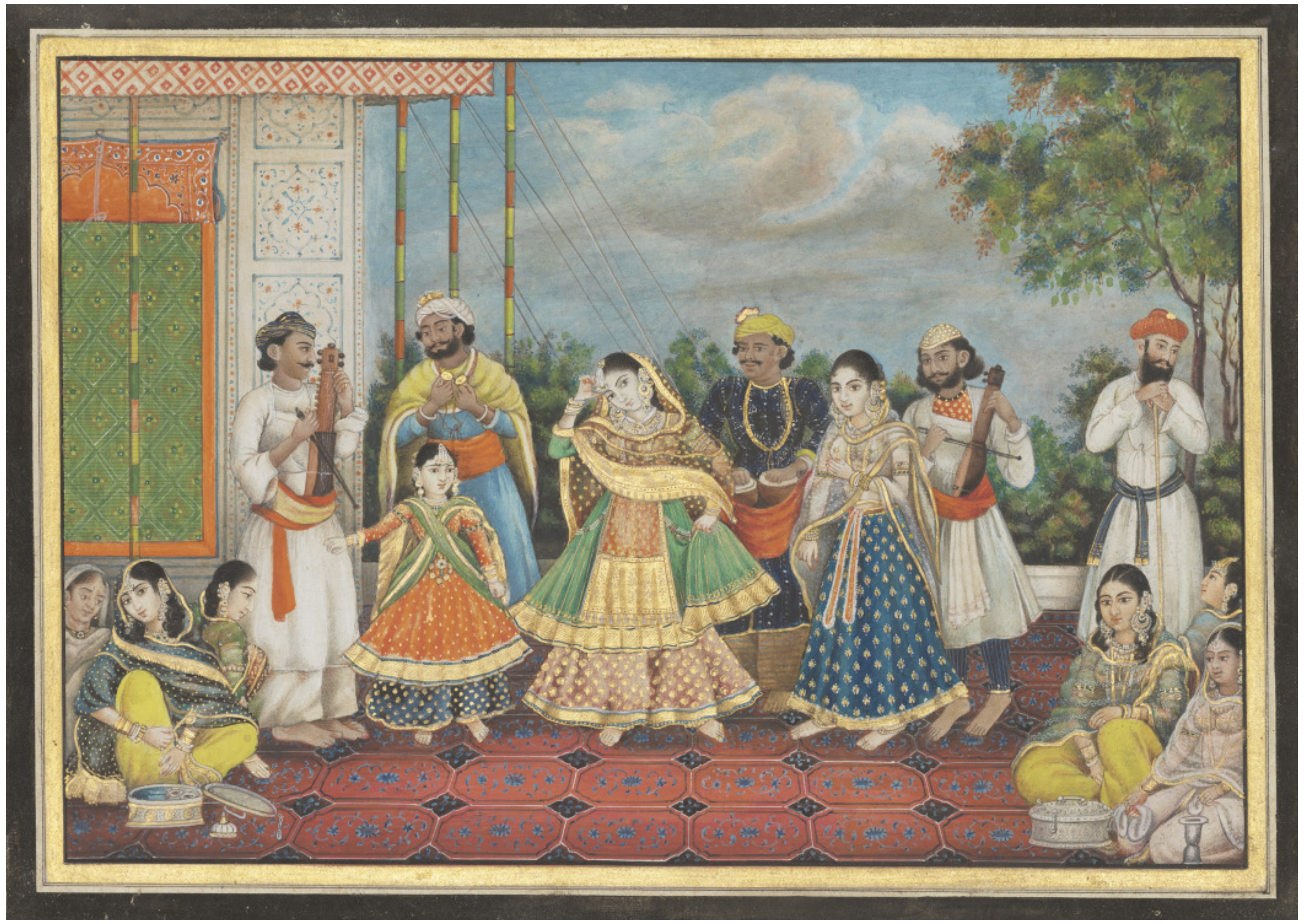
EXHIBITED:
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

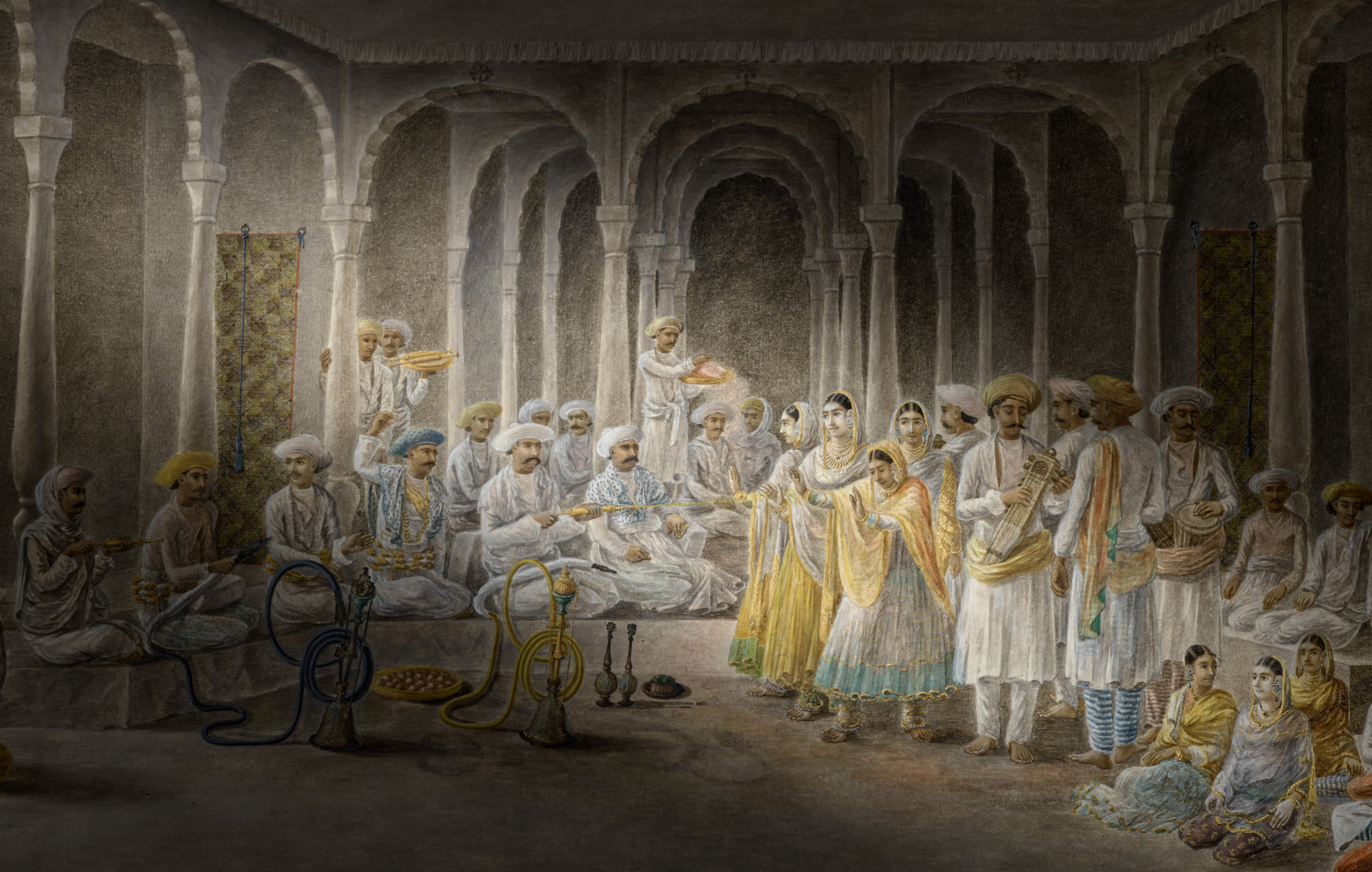
LITERATURE:
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.141, p.182-3
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.141, p.182-3

This painting is based on the composition of the painting in the British Library which, as noted in the previous lot note, was presented to an unnamed guest of Colonel Skinner's in 1838 (acc.no.Add.Or.2598). Both take place on a carpeted terrace, with a tree in right hand corner, and a white marble pavilion to the left of the composition. The pose of the central figure is very similar. In some aspects, however, the scenes differ. While four musicians appear behind the dancers in our scene, five are present in the British Library painting. While the figure playing the *sarangi* in the British Library painting has grey hair, he is much more youthful in our painting: in fact, he resembles the *sarangi* player in the previous lot. Also younger is the dancer to the left of the central figure, who in this painting appears to be a child. The pigments selected by the artist appear different: the tarnished silver vessels on the floor in the previous lot are here executed in white pigment, perhaps specifically to avoid later deterioration. However, the similarities are so close that this painting and the British Library painting must be copies of one another. This painting, therefore, should also be understood as a painting of Colonel Skinner's *Nautch*.

The evidence of *Tazkirat al-Umara* manuscripts suggests that Skinner's artists were used to making copies of the same composition, and introducing subtle variations in them. The portrait of Kalyan Singh of Kishangarh in the Quaritch manuscript (McBurney 2014, fig.4) is identical in almost every respect to that in the British Library manuscript (Losty 2014): the prince appears identically attired, leaning on plush yellow cushions and laconically holding a gold-hilted sword and enamelled shield. The slightly different decoration of the marble palace wall behind him and the substitution of a blue curtain for a red one are the most significant changes. Similarly, when our painting is compared to the British Library example the most obvious changes are in the textiles – in this case a different carpet – and the architecture. The repeated niche designs containing floral sprays which appear in the portrait of the prince in the British Library manuscript correspond with those on the British Library painting of Kalyan Singh, while the larger panels on the Quaritch portrait are closer in style to those on ours. Other instances where variation between the Quartich and British Library albums is confined to the architectural detail and the textiles include the depictions of Raja Karam Singh of Patiala and Bhai Udai Singh of Kaithal, both of whom appear on different patterned carpets and in subtly altered interiors. In short, riffing on the patterns of textiles and architectural decorations in otherwise unaltered compositions was clearly a practice employed by Skinner's artists.

It is therefore possible to assume that this painting, like its copy in the British Library, was executed in Skinner's atelier and meant to be presented to one of James Skinner's guests. All three copies of the *Tazkirat al-Umara* were presented to officers in the British Army (McBurney 2014, p.2). As a host, Skinner was extremely generous, and was well known for handing out pictures of his *nautch* performers, which Yuthika Sharma describes as 'an essential complement to the experience of the *nautch*' (Sharma 2022, p.292). As Emily Eden continued on her journey through Northern India after having met Skinner, she received a letter from him, insisting that "if the Miss Edens do not wish to mortify an old soldier, and bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, they will accept a pair of shawls he has ordered for them in Cashmere, which have just arrived". This painting is very likely to have also been intended as a souvenir.





TWO PAGES FROM THE CALEDON ALBUM

The Caledon Album is an group of paintings of Hindu ceremonies and festivals by the artist Sewak Ram. The album originally comprised fourteen paintings. Today others are in the Art Institute of Chicago, the British Library (inv.Add.Or.4300), and in Private Collections. Du Pré Alexander, the 2nd Earl of Caledon, was Governor of the Cape of Good Hope (1806-11) and although he never travelled to India, he was known professionally to Lord Minto, the owner of another Sewak Ram album now split between the British Library, Victoria & Albert Museum, and the Chester Beatty Library.

*56

A GATHERING DURING HOLI

ATTRIBUTED TO SEWAK RAM, PATNA, INDIA, CIRCA 1813

Translucent and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, between black and white rules, reverse plain, mounting paper watermarked J. Whatman and dated 1813, mounted, framed and glazed
14¾ x 22½in. (37.6 x 57.2cm.)

£100,000-150,000
US$140,000-200,000
€120,000-170,000

PROVENANCE:
The Earls of Caledon, probably the 2nd Earl (1777-1839)
Thence by descent
Sotheby's London, *Fine Indian Miniatures, Indian and Other Asian Works of Art*, 29 March 1982, lot 67
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1982

EXHIBITED:
Company Painting, a century of Indian art for European patrons, 1770-1870, Eyre and Hobhouse, London, 1982

LITERATURE:
B. Milton, *Company Painting, a century of Indian art for European patrons, 1770-1870*, Eyre and Hobhouse, London, 1982, no.19

INSCRIPTIONS:
On the reverse, in pencil, 'Howlee - Throwing the Red Stuff'

In this vibrant and animated scene, Sewak Ram captures a moment of spirited festivity during the Hindu festival of Holi, the celebration of spring, colour, and renewal. At the heart of the composition, seated nobles mischievously spray coloured water from golden syringes at a group of surprised maidens. The women recoil with raised hands in a gesture of mock protest, their expressions suspended somewhere between shock and laughter, a delicate balance of spontaneity and theatricality that hints at the chaos and joy to come.

While Holi is frequently represented in Indian miniature painting, Sewak Ram's version stands apart for its richly detailed portrayal of social interaction and its unusual compositional balance. The scene is both playful and ceremonial, capturing a festival moment in which the social order is momentarily upended, yet still rendered with the artist's characteristic elegance and structure.

Sewak Ram was celebrated for his detailed depictions of public life, particularly large gatherings during festivals and religious ceremonies. He was not merely a documentarian, but a master of mood, gesture, and individualized expression. Here, the opalescent white muslin garments worn by all participants shimmer across the composition, hallmarks of his meticulous observation and virtuosity in rendering the drape and translucence of contemporary textiles.

The individualisation of figures, each with their own expression, posture, and reaction, brings a narrative richness that rewards close viewing. While the architectural setting is secondary, it remains carefully constructed, framing the scene without dominating it.

This painting and lot 57 formed part of a now-famous album once owned by the Earls of Caledon before being dispersed in in 1982. Thanks to its original album format, the present painting has been preserved in exceptionally fine condition, maintaining the freshness and luminosity of its palette.

Sewak Ram (active c.1770–1830) was a central figure in the Patna school of Company painting, known for bridging Mughal artistic traditions with the emerging visual tastes of European patrons. Originally from Murshidabad, he had by 1790 established himself in Patna, a prosperous city on the southern bank of the Ganges that became a hub of international trade—and a fertile ground for cross-cultural artistic exchange.

Unlike the tightly controlled miniatures of Mughal ateliers, Patna paintings, often executed using the *kajli seahi* technique (painting directly in ink and brush without underdrawing), favoured loose, expressive brushwork, naturalistic lighting, and more casual subjects. They were deeply influenced by European watercolour practices and the growing demand for ethnographic and everyday scenes from British officers posted in the region.

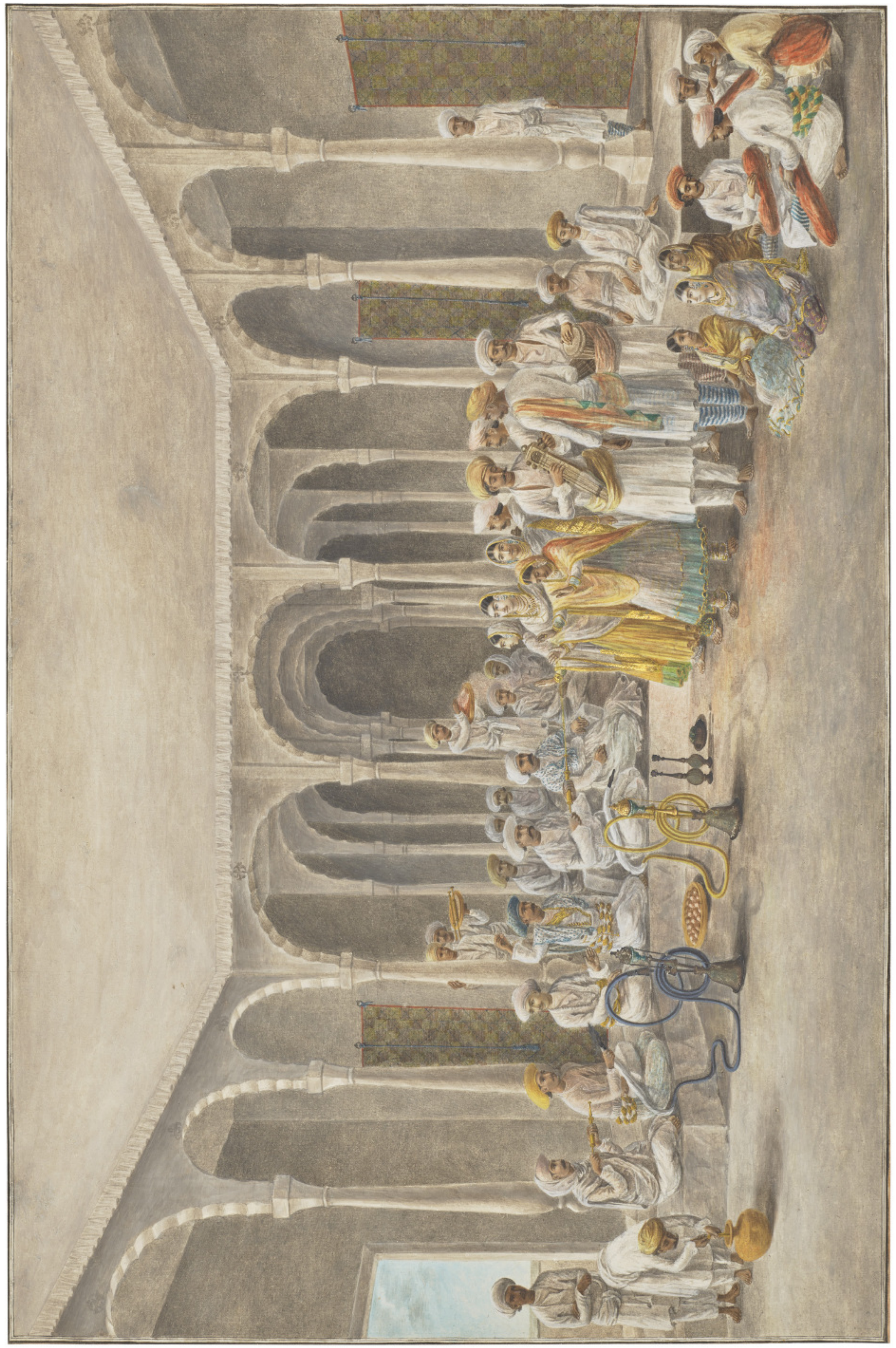
Sewak Ram was the most prolific and accomplished artist of this school, producing several series of large-scale festival and ceremonial scenes. Though his works are unsigned, they were often attributed to him by patrons and scholars due to his distinctive style. His name frequently appears in association with albums compiled for British officials, many of which have since entered major museum collections.

Paintings by Sewak Ram are held in major public collections including: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (acc. no. 2008.434); Victoria and Albert Museum, London (acc. nos. IM.86-1949, IM.87-1949, IS.74-1954, IS.63-1964); Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (acc. nos. 74.2, 74.3); British Library, London

Related works were sold at Bonhams, London (11 June 2020, lots 171, 178, and 179), confirming the enduring interest in Sewak Ram's nuanced documentation of Indian life under colonial patronage.

As Mildred Archer and Toby Falk have noted: "Sewak Ram had two distinct styles: one used for large compositions such as this, with transparency, modelling, and neutral tones echoing European watercolours; and another, less Europeanised, marked by bold colour and sketchier forms" (Archer 1990).

This vivid Holi celebration exemplifies Sewak Ram's artistic mastery—not just in composition and technique, but in the emotional intelligence with which he captured human interaction, festival energy, and visual splendour. It is a fine and rare example of a documentary yet poetic vision of India in the early 19th century.



***57**

A FEAST IN AN ELEGANT INTERIOR

ATTRIBUTED TO SEWAK RAM, PATNA, INDIA, CIRCA 1813

Translucent and opaque pigments on paper, set within black and white rules, reverse plain, mounting paper watermarked J. Whatman and dated 1813, mounted, framed and glazed
14¼ x 22⅞in. (38.6 x 58.2cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
The Earls of Caledon, probably the 2nd Earl (1777-1839)
By descent
Sotheby's London, *Fine Indian Miniatures, Indian and Other Asian Works of Art*, 29 March 1982, lot 67
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1982

EXHIBITED:
Company Painting, a century of Indian art for European patrons, 1770-1870, Eyre and Hobhouse, London, 1982

LITERATURE:
B. Milton, *Company Painting, a century of Indian art for European patrons, 1770-1870*, Eyre and Hobhouse exhibition catalogue, London, 1982

INSCRIPTIONS:
On the reverse, in pencil, 'Nashta - Breakfast'

This painting presents a rare and unusually restrained vision of courtly life in early 19th-century India, attributed to the renowned Patna artist Sewak Ram. Best known for his vividly detailed depictions of state processions, durbars, and festival scenes, Sewak Ram was a leading figure in the Company painting tradition. His works are typically grand and ceremonial, often populated by throngs of figures and set against complex architectural backdrops.

In contrast, this quiet, meditative interior scene offers an unexpectedly intimate glimpse into the daily life of a ruler, not in the public theatre of power, but in a moment of private repose. The composition is formally structured yet emotionally subdued, revealing a softer, more passive side of princely life rarely captured in Indian court painting of the period.

The central figure, presumably the ruler, is seated alone at the centre delicately consuming his meal. His solitude is striking: the act of eating, so often a communal or ceremonial activity in Indian courts, is here segregated and solemn. There is no pomp, no musicians, no courtly fanfare only the dignified ritual of nourishment.

Two kneeling attendants serve the food to the ruler. Behind him, nine attendants stand in readiness, each holding additional dishes, poised to serve but not to intrude. Their composure reflects a courtly discipline, reinforcing the atmosphere of formality and reverence even in this seemingly mundane setting.

A large fabric-panelled fan operated by a nearly imperceptible *pankha wallah* hidden in a darkened doorway at the back of the scene, looms overhead, ensuring the circulation of air. This small detail adds to the realism of the scene while subtly drawing attention to the infrastructure of comfort that surrounds the ruler, even in solitude.

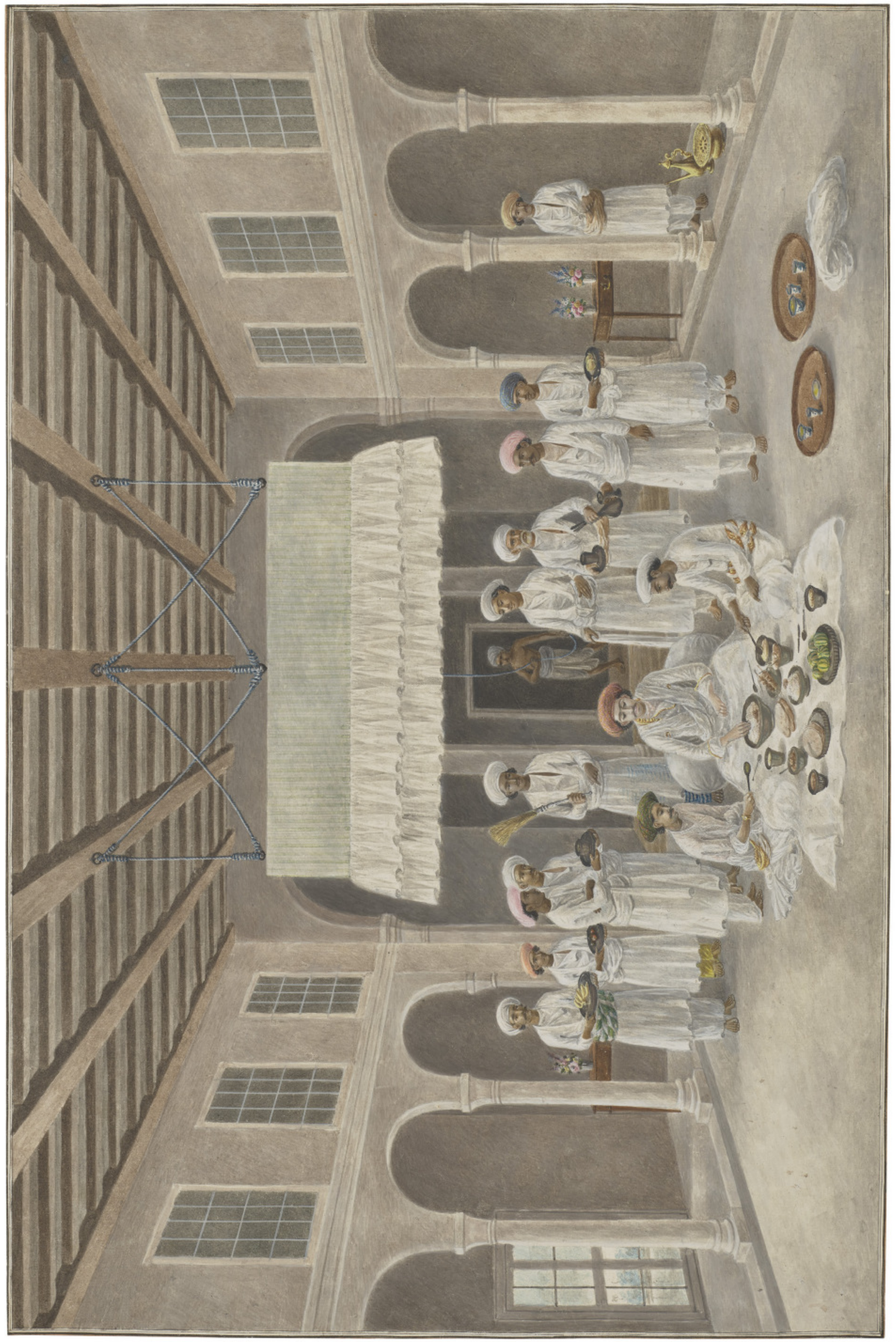
The only splash of vibrant colour appears in the back right corner: a pair of European blue-and-white vases brimming with fresh flowers, resting atop an English-style side table. This curious inclusion perhaps serves as a visual footnote to the growing presence of European aesthetics within the Indian elite's private spaces. Whether a literal observation or a symbolic nod, the floral arrangement stands as a quiet marker of the pervasive foreign influence that had, by the early 19th century, seeped into even the most intimate corners of Indian aristocratic life.

While many of Sewak Ram's known works celebrate spectacle, be it grand processions, hunting scenes, or lavish celebrations, this painting stands apart in both tone and subject. Scenes of passive, contemplative domestic life are extremely rare in his surviving oeuvre, and rarer still in Company painting more broadly, which often prioritised external appearances and ethnographic detail over psychological depth.

Here, however, the artist's hand is equally deft. His linear precision of the architectural details, delicate white washes, and compositional clarity remain, but the emotional register is different: quiet, interior, reflective. The subdued palette and balanced symmetry serve not just aesthetic ends, but underscore the dignity of stillness, an aesthetic of restraint.

This rare and reflective painting represents a critical counterpoint to the dominant themes of Sewak Ram's better-known work. With its quiet authority, psychological subtlety, and masterfully composed detail, it offers a nuanced vision of princely life rarely acknowledged in either traditional Indian or Company painting genres.

Beyond its rarity and technical finesse, this work resonates for its human dimension: a ruler, alone with his meal, surrounded by silent attendants and the faint stir of a fan, in a world slowly shifting under the weight of history and foreign presence.



In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol. Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.

***58**

A NAWAB WATCHING A *NAUTCH* IN A PALACE HALL

MURSHIDABAD, INDIA, CIRCA 1810

Translucent pigments on paper, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
12½ x 18⅛in. (31.7 x 46.1cm.)

£20,000-30,000
US$28,000-41,000
€24,000-35,000

PROVENANCE:
Hobhouse Ltd., London, 1986

This refined and atmospheric painting captures a quiet moment of courtly leisure, showing a Nawab seated in a palace hall as he observes a classical *nautch* performance accompanied by musicians. Dated to around 1810, this work likely belongs to the Murshidabad school, known for its delicate architectural style and precise perspective, shaped by both Mughal and early Company School influences.

The scene is set within a finely articulated palace interior, where the emphasis rests not on the actors of the drama, but on the space they inhabit. A series of tall columns support five cusped archways, framing elegantly recessed windows that draw the eye into the distance. Through the central opening, a temple spire is just visible, an architectural gesture that links the private courtly world with the sacred landscape beyond.

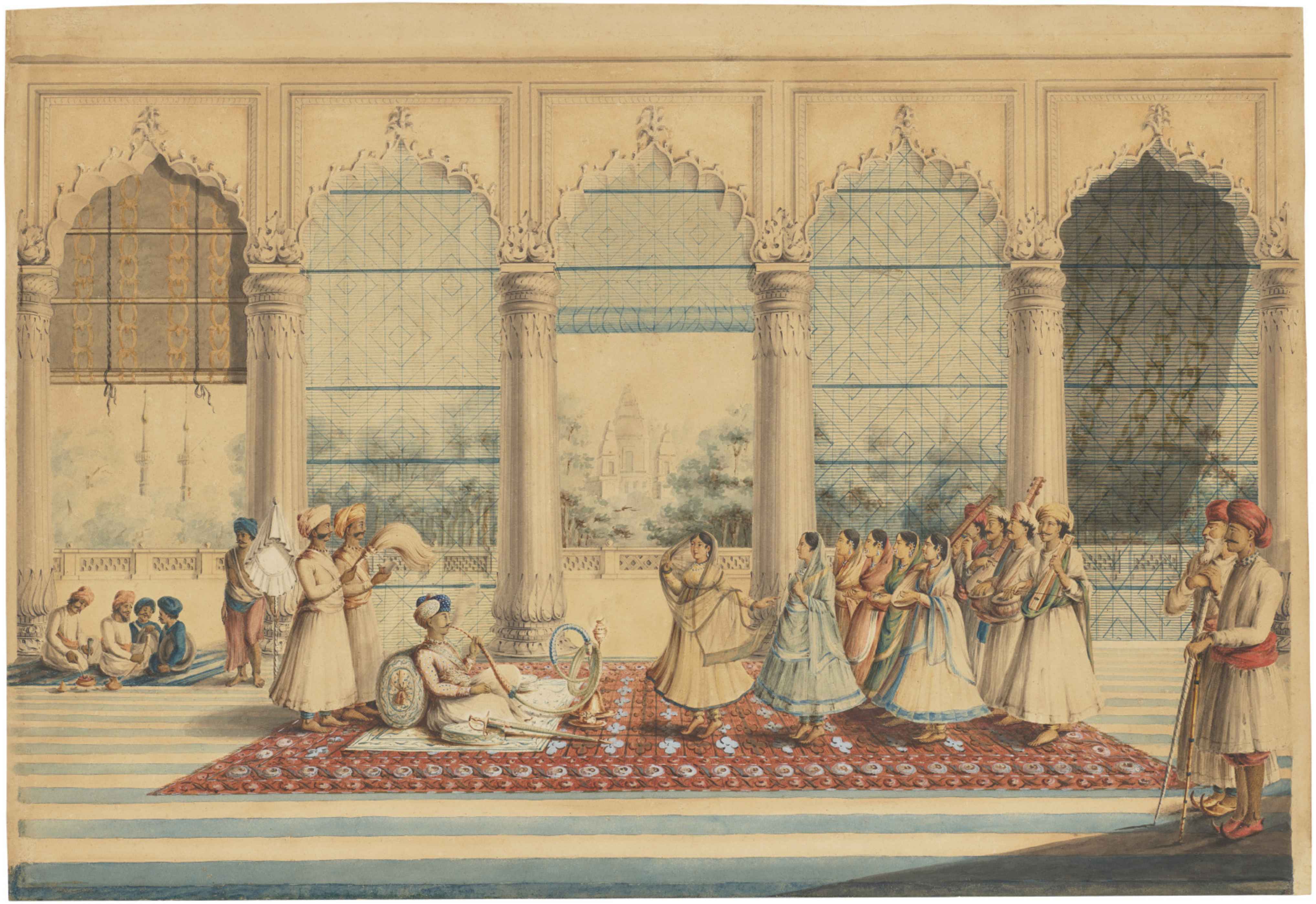
Every detail is rendered with a remarkable eye for observation. The reed window screens, with their crisp geometric diamond patterns, are meticulously drawn. On the right, an awning is shown angled and tied to shield the interior from the sun, while on the left, a matching awning is neatly rolled up, subtle details that speak to the painter's lived understanding of the space. The floor coverings, too, are carefully delineated: a richly patterned red carpet with rows of quatrefoil motifs in terracotta and pale blue tones, rests on top of a blue and white banded *dhurrie*, enhancing the formality of the performance space.

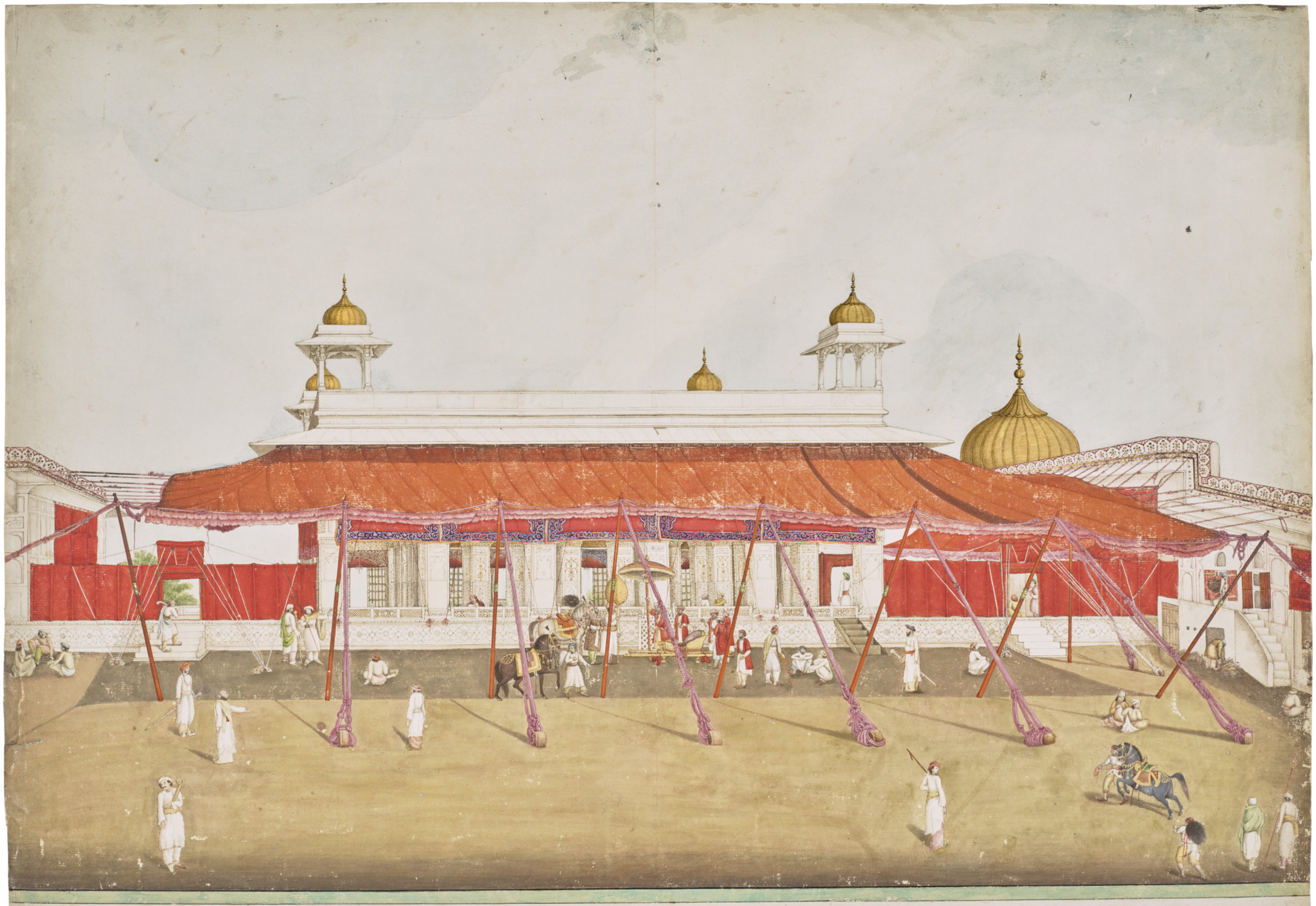
In the foreground, a dancer performs for the Nawab, backed by singer and two rows or female and male musicians. Their postures and placement are composed with clarity and order, reinforcing the calm, ceremonial atmosphere. The Nawab himself, though unnamed, wears the distinctive Murshidabad-Lucknow style turban and sports a long moustache, features that suggest a man of refined taste and princely bearing. He is relaxing on a large bolster smoking a *huqqa*, set right in front of the performers reflecting the intimacy of the performance.

Though unsigned, the painting may depict the interior of the Agna Mahal, a part of the Nawab's palace complex at Murshidabad, located on the banks of the Hooghly River. The spatial depth, natural lighting, and architectural elegance are consistent with other known depictions from this royal complex, dating to the early 19th century.

This painting stands as a quiet but sophisticated example of Murshidabad court painting at the turn of the 19th century, when Indian artists were engaging with evolving tastes shaped by European techniques and perspectives. Here, rather than dynamic action or dramatic gesture, the focus is on the serenity and symmetry of the architectural space, and on the ritualised elegance of courtly life.

The artist's interest in structure, light, and material detail marks a transition from the ornamental excess of earlier Mughal painting to the more observational realism encouraged by Company patrons. Yet the scene retains its distinct Indo-Islamic identity, from the dancers' gestures to the Nawab's profile, nestled within a hybrid aesthetic that captures the essence of a fading but still vibrant princely culture





The Diwan Khaſs in the Palace at Delhi where the King holds his Durbars – of marble richly gilded and inlaid with cornelian, agate, &ca in the Stile of the Taj at Agra –

*59

THE *DIWAN-I KHAS* IN THE RED FORT IN DELHI

SIGNED BY GHULAM ALI KHAN, DELHI, INDIA, CIRCA 1815-20

Translucent and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down on card, with green border below, the signature set into a panel on the far left edge, inscribed in English in margin beneath, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 19½ x 29in. (49.5 x 73.5cm.); folio 20½ x 29in. (52.2 x 73.5cm.)

£70,000-100,000
US$96,000-140,000
€81,000-120,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby 's New York, *Fine Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic Works of Art,* 30 June 1980, lot 18B

INSCRIPTIONS:

Signed on a panel of the building along the left margin, *'amal-i ghulam 'ali khan musawwir,* 'Work of Ghulam 'Ali Khan the painter'
On the building in a central panel, a Persian couplet, frequently attributed to Amir Khusraw, *agar firdaws bar ru-i zamin ast / hamin ast [u] hamin ast u hamin ast,* 'If there is paradise on earth, Then it is this, it is this, it is this.'

This richly detailed composition unfolds in the forecourt of the iconic Diwan-i-Khas, the Hall of Private Audience within the Red Fort. The artist invites viewers into a carefully observed architectural space rendered with meticulous precision, from the inlaid marble, gilding, and jewel-like ornamentation to the elegantly drawn guy ropes that seem almost animate, tugging at the viewer's gaze.

At its core, several principal figures gather around, preparing for a royal departure, the horses and palanquin drawing the viewer's eye. Yet attention is drawn equally to attendants and details across the scene, subtly anchoring the observer's eye to every inch of the masterfully executed architecture and human activity. Hidden discreetly along the left edge, on a marble panel, Ghulam Ali Khan has written his signature, a testament to the artist's carefully considered compositional balance.

Another version of the same composition, also signed by Ghulam Ali Khan, is in the British Library (Add.Or4694, see Dalrymple and Sharma 2012, cat.64,pp.154-5). It is dated 1817 and is essentially identical to ours, with minute details repeated in both versions, such as the damage to the marble panel on the sloping roof edge centre, the ropes and knots in ropes, the textiles, *pietra dura* designs and more. Even the green horizontal border band at the bottom of the painted area is the same in both. There are a very few subtle variations in the figures and the colours of their garments, and very small differences in one or two of the doors and the knots of the ropes, but these are noticeable only on very close observation. It is also of extremely similar size to ours. Interestingly, ours includes inscriptions on the central marble columns of the building, quoting verses of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi (see above). These do not appear on the British Library version.

The 1817 version in the British Library has long been considered Ghulam Ali Khan's earliest topographical work, and ours was likely painted around the same time - there is no evidence to suggest it is later. Sharma pointed out that a sketch of the same scene attributed to Thomas or William Daniell of 1811-13, which was based on an earlier version of 1789, probably provided the model for Ghulam Ali Khan's 1817 version, and thus presumably for ours too. She commented that this apparent exposure of Ghulam Ali Khan and his circle to works by the Daniells is an important element in the evolution of the artistic styles of the period (Sharma 2019, pp.141-2). It is also interesting to note that the inscriptions in the lower border of the British Library version identifying the scene are written in Persian, whereas on ours it is written in English. This perhaps suggests that ours was made for a British patron.

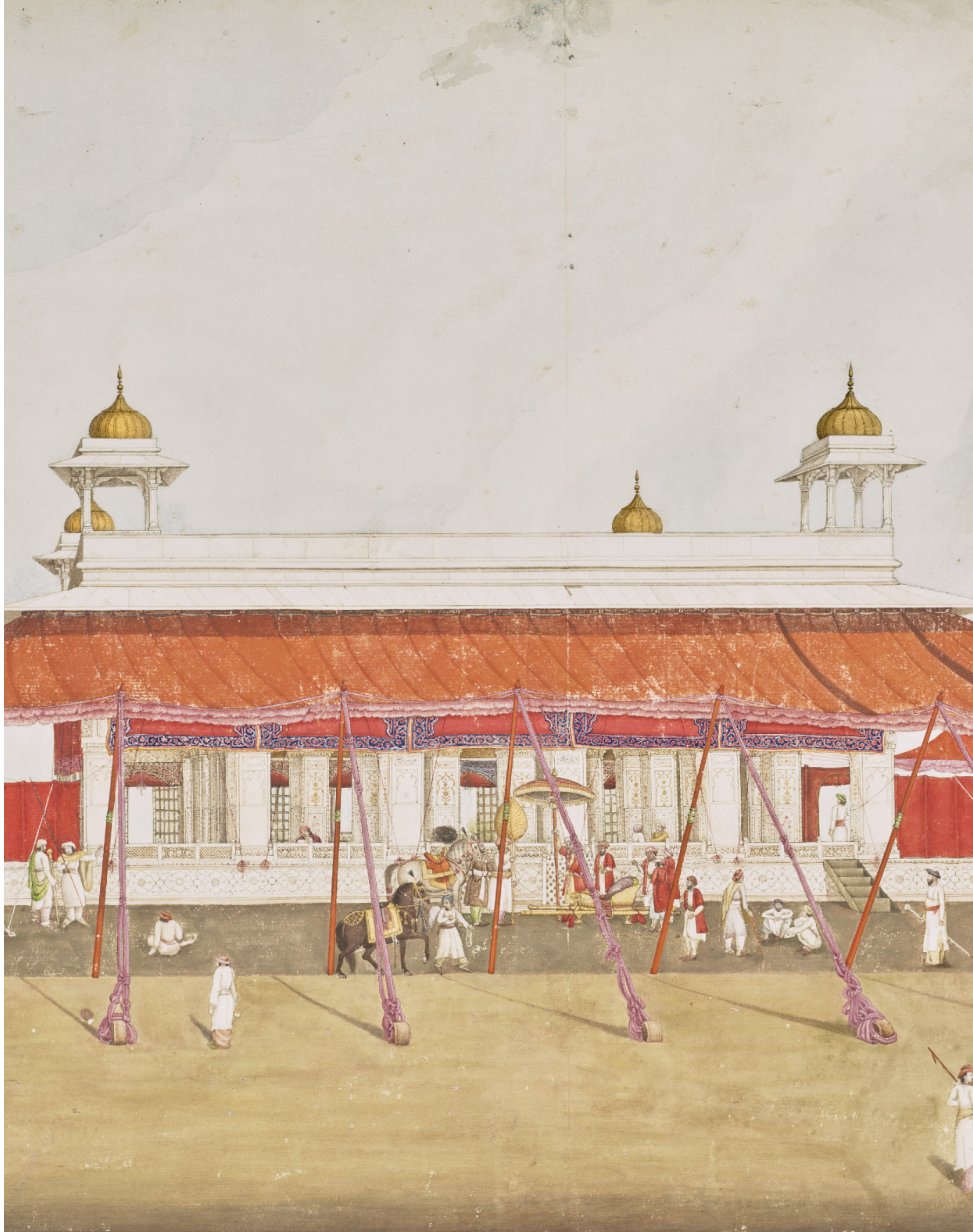
Ghulam Ali Khan (fl. 1817-1852) was a pivotal figure in the last flowering of the Mughal painting tradition and a major progenitor of the Delhi topographical school. He served as court painter to Emperors Akbar II (r. 1806-1837) and Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-1858), signing himself reverently as "His Majesty's Painter" or "the hereditary slave of the dynasty." As the Mughal court's financial resources dwindled, Khan navigated the changing social landscape by accepting commissions from British patrons, including William and James Fraser, Colonel James Skinner, and from regional courts in Alwar and Jhajjar. Through this interplay of cultural contexts, he developed a remarkable synthesis of late Mughal aesthetics and Company style, deftly integrating architectural topography, naturalistic depth, and European-inspired perspective.

These two depictions of the Diwan-i-Khas stand as the foundation of his topographical oeuvre. From this point on, Ghulam Ali Khan became a forerunner in moving Indian painting beyond its miniature traditions into more expansive, portrait-rich architectural landscapes.

Ghulam Ali Khan's career exemplifies the evolving role of Indian artists under European influence. In creating works for patrons such as William Fraser (notably The Fraser Album, compiled between 1815-1819, see lots 40-47) and Sir Thomas Metcalfe (The Delhi Book, commissioned in 1844), he contributed to a visual archive that blended Mughal courtly culture with European tastes for documentary realism and topographical detail.

His panoramic architectural scenes, portraits, and illustrations of courtly life became a visual testimony to a world in transition, both preserving Mughal heritage and accommodating colonial aesthetic interests.

This watercolour of the Diwan-i-Khas is not merely an architectural rendering but a narrative canvas layered with history, craftsmanship, and cultural transition. As an elegantly signed work by Ghulam Ali Khan, it stands at the crossroads of the Mughal dynasty's twilight and the rise of Company-era patronage. It is both an exquisite architectural portrait and a work of remarkable historical resonance that continues to enhance our understanding of early 19th-century Indian art.



***60**

A ROYAL PROCESSION OF RAJA TULSA JI OF TANJORE (R.1765-86)

TANJORE, INDIA, CIRCA 1770-1780

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within fragmentary red border, later canvas backing, mounted, framed and glazed
24¾ x 38¾in. (63 x 98cm.)

£40,000-60,000
US$55,000-82,000
€47,000-69,000

PROVENANCE:

Christie's London, *Islamic, Indian, South-East Asian Manuscripts, Miniatures and Works of Art*, 11 June 1986, lot 160
Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1986

EXHIBITED:

Indian Painting during the British Period, Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1986

LITERATURE:

P. Mason, *Indian Painting during the British Period*, Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1986, no.3

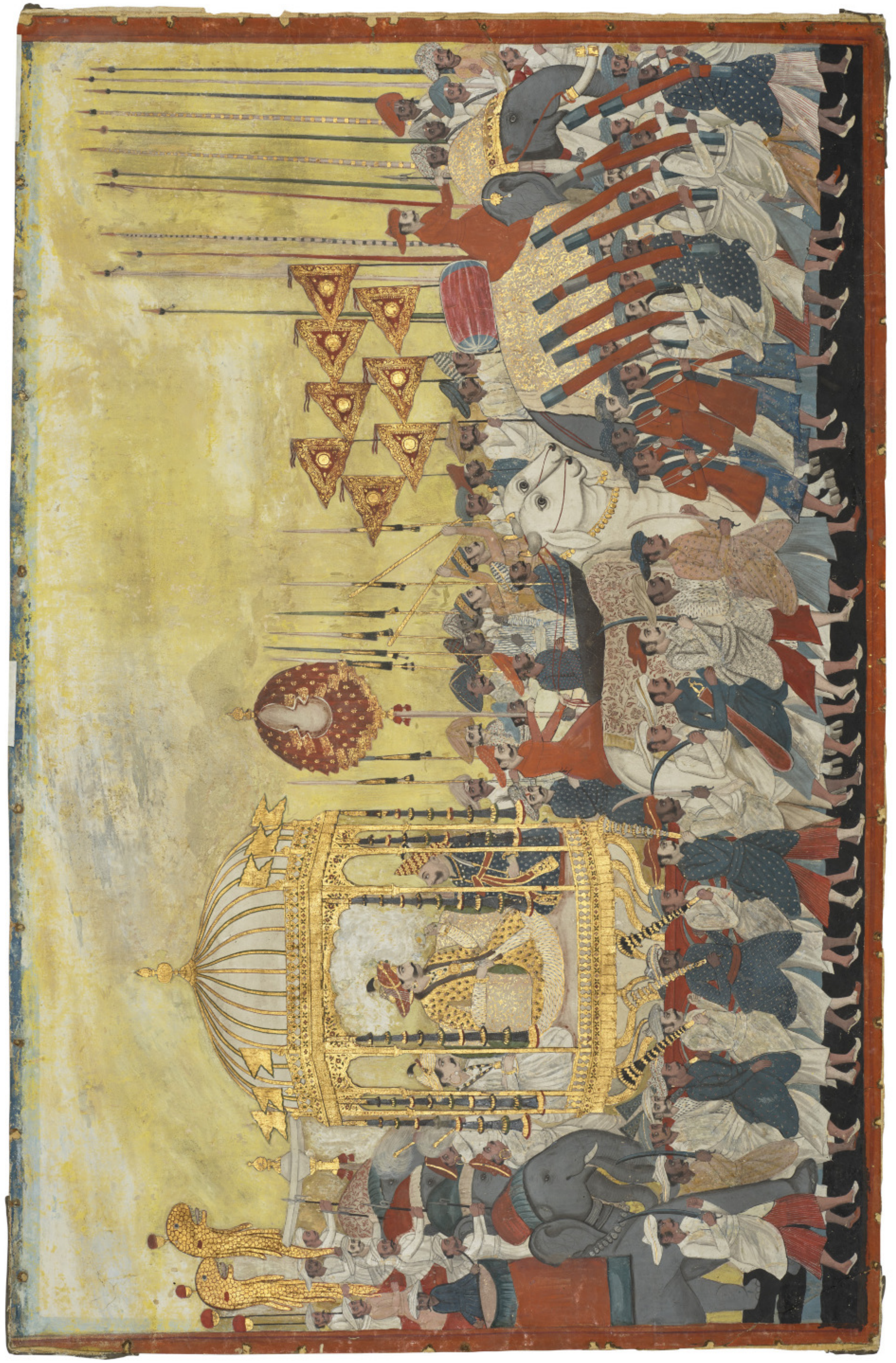
This impressively large painting shows Raja Tulsaji of Tanjore (r. 1763-87) in a grand state procession. He sits in an splendid octagonal chariot drawn by two large white oxen and holds a white flower. The Raja is accompanied in the chariot by two men, the man facing him likely an important minister and the other an attendant. An elephant bedecked in gold textiles rides ahead whilst further elephants follow behind the chariot carrying drummers. Gilded flags and shining gold fish-shaped standards fly in the wind. Accompanying the procession on foot is a crowd of attendants, guards and soldiers, some of whom stare out of the page directly at the viewer, involving us in this magnificent event. Despite this regal display of pomp and splendour, the Rajas of Tanjore held very little real power by the late 18th century. Following skirmishes with the Nawab of the Carnatic, a close ally of the British East India Company, Tanjore was subsequently besieged and occupied by the joint forces of the Nawab and the Company. In 1773 the East India company demanded that Tulsaji accept British protectorate status and disband his military. By the end of the 18th century Tanjore became a regulation district of the Madras Presidency and Raja Sarabhoji (r. 1798-1832), Tulsaji's son, was a pensioned nobleman of the Company (Archer 1992, p.43).

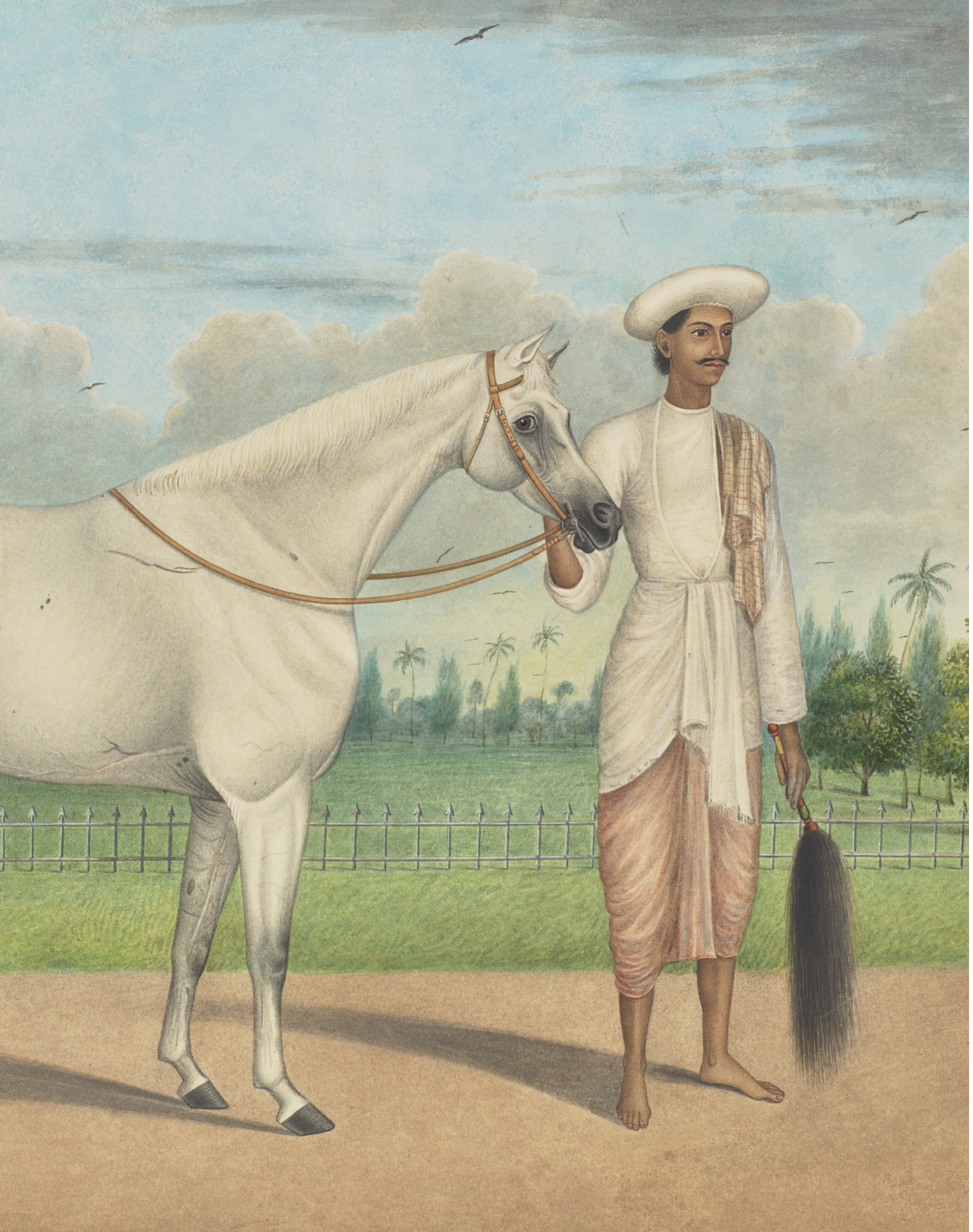
Tanjore painting in the 18th century stylistically drew influence from Hyderabad, likely as a result of a number of artists who relocated to Tanjore at the beginning of the century in search of patronage (Archer 1992, p.45). Towards the end of the century the increasing numbers of British, and later French, officials and passers-through created a fertile environment for Company School painting. Albums depicting trades and occupations were particularly popular, as were portraits of current and historic rulers of Tanjore.

Our processional painting relates to a group of similar works of similarly impressive scale. A very similar processional scene of Raja Tulsaji in his octagonal chariot from the Collection of Edwin Binney III is in the San Diego Museum of Art (inv.no. 1990.1415) and another from the Sven Gahlin Collection was sold at Sotheby's, 6 October 2015, lot 53. The ex-Gahlin painting was originally part of a group of three stylistically similar large Tanjore paintings belonging to General Sir John Dalling, Commander-in-chief at Madras (1785-6). The other two were sold in these Rooms 23 September 2005, lot 43, and are now in the British Museum (2005,0705,0.1 and 2005,0705,0.2). They depict Sir John and other officers being carried in palanquins in processions of their own. It is therefore likely that large processional scenes were also popular, albeit less common, commissions alongside the smaller albums being produced in Tanjore at the time. Despite Tanjore's waning independence, the fashion for processional paintings of the Rajas in full pomp continued into the 19th century. A processional scene of Raja Sarabhoji is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (M.90.141.5) and an painting of both Amar Singh (who served as regent for Sarabhoji) and Sarabhoji is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (IM.10-1938).

Our painting is closest to the San Diego example, although of superior quality. In the San Diego and ex-Gahlin paintings the great temple of Tanjore is visible in the background and is probably the destination of the procession. Stately processions were held annually for the Dussehra festival in September/October which could be the occasion depicted in all three paintings. Our procession is probably also headed to the temple, which is indicated by the elephant riding ahead with an empty seat, found in all three paintings, on which the Raja would ride back from the temple (Goswamy and Smith 2005, no. 122). Both the San Diego and ex-Gahlin examples have just one figure accompanying the Raja in the chariot and not the two seen here. Only the Los Angeles painting has three figures in the chariot where a British official is shown riding alongside Raja Sarabhoji and his minister.

In style and quality of painting the present work is closely comparable to another impressive processional painting of Raja Tulsaji, this time on horseback and surrounded by his entourage, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (IM.319-1921). That painting is dated circa 1770 and it is likely that our painting is similarly dated. The ex-Gahlin painting is dated slightly earlier and it is tempting to think that these works were created in the late 1760s or early 1770s as a reflection of the Raja's pomp prior to losing independence in 1773. The aforementioned processional scenes dated later include a greater number of soldiers in European-style uniform (although there are some present here) or, in the case of the Los Angeles example, British officials which would support the idea that our work represents an earlier period. The two attendants in our painting who ride in the chariot with Tulsaji further support the idea that this work predates 1773 when the Raja presided over his own court. However, if the ex-Gahlin painting was a commission for Sir John Dalling painted alongside the two other British Library paintings then a pre-1773 dating is unlikely.



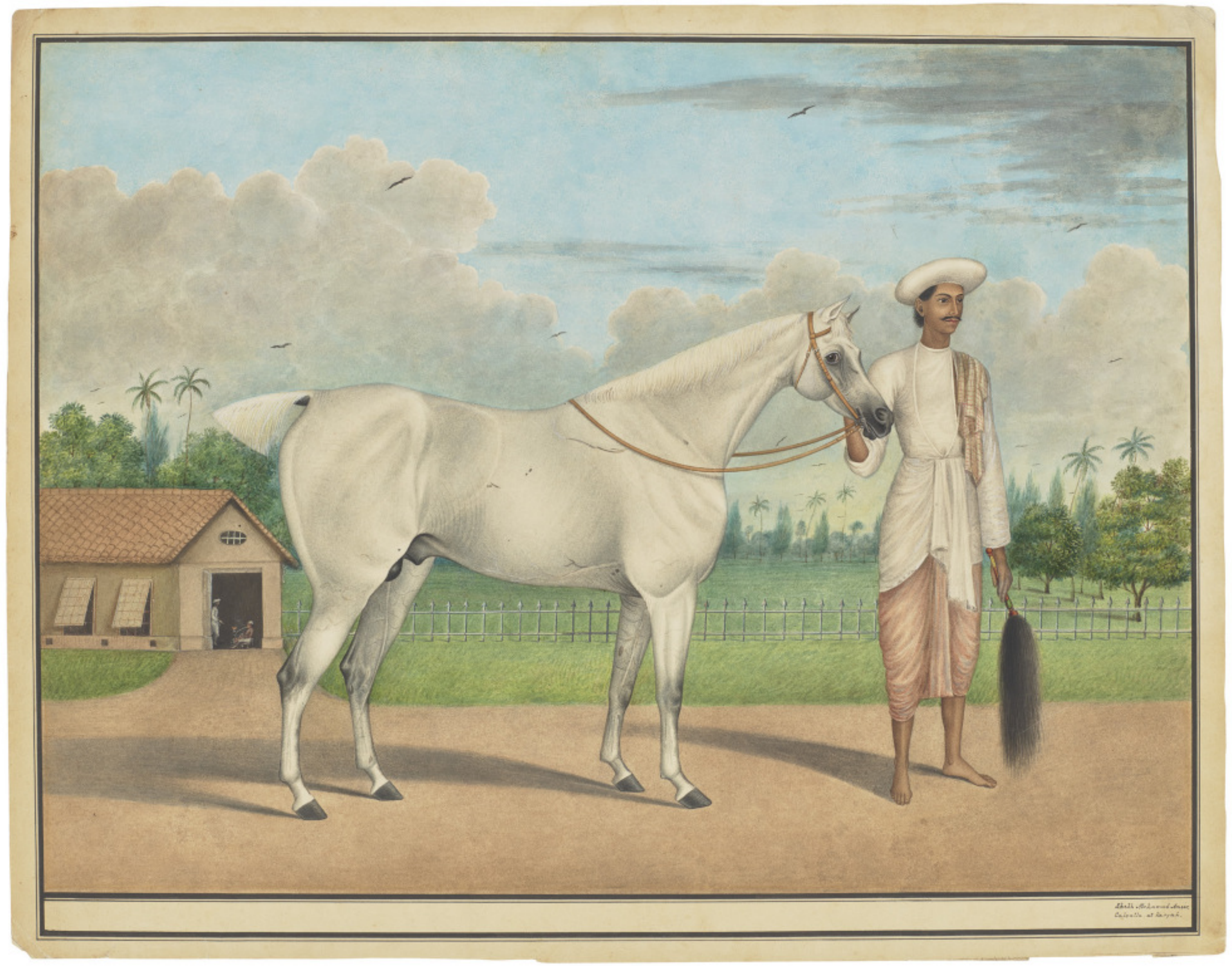


TWO PAINTINGS OF HORSES AND THEIR GROOMS, BY SHAYKH MUHAMMAD AMIR OF KARRAYA

Of the artists working in Calcutta in the 19th century, Shaykh Muhammad Amir of Karraya is considered one of the three most prominent painters working alongside Shaykh Zayn al-Din and Sita Ram (Ekhtiar *et al.* 2011, no. 287, pp.402–3). Working in a time of great prosperity, he proffered his talent to a variety of patrons, touring Calcutta in search of individual commissions from the wealthy British residents who began moving to palatial mansions and estates in the leafy suburbs of Chowringhee and Garden Reach towards the end of the 18th century.

One of his best known clients was Thomas Holroyd, a wealthy businessman, for whom he painted many scenes of his family, staff, home and all aspects of his life in Calcutta; an album of paintings made for him by the artist was presented to the Oriental Club in 1839 (a portrait of a carriage horse held by a groom from that series was published in Ray 2015, no. 68, pp. 172-173). Yet it was for an unknown patron that one of the most celebrated sets of paintings by Shaykh Muhammad Amir was produced. Two paintings from the set, one showing a horse and carriage and another showing two dogs, are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (IS.5-1957 and IS.6-1957). Other paintings from the series are in the India Office Library (Welch 1978, nos.20-23, pp. 67-71).

In contrast to the natural history studies of Zayn al-Din or the landscapes of Sita Ram, Shaykh Muhammad Amir delighted his patrons with paintings of their houses and households. As evidenced by the two paintings offered here, he was particularly adept at accomplished portraits of horses. Expertly adapting to the late Georgian tastes of the period, his idiosyncratic style is nonetheless easily identifiable.



***61**

A HORSE AND GROOM

SIGNED BY MUHAMMAD AMIR OF KARRAYA, CALCUTTA, INDIA, CIRCA 1840

Pencil, watercolour and gum arabic on paper, within black rules, acribed in lower right border, reverse plain with pencil inscription identifying the provenance, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 13⅛ x 17⅞in. (33.3 x 45.5cm.); folio 14¾ x 19in. (37.5 x 48.2cm.)

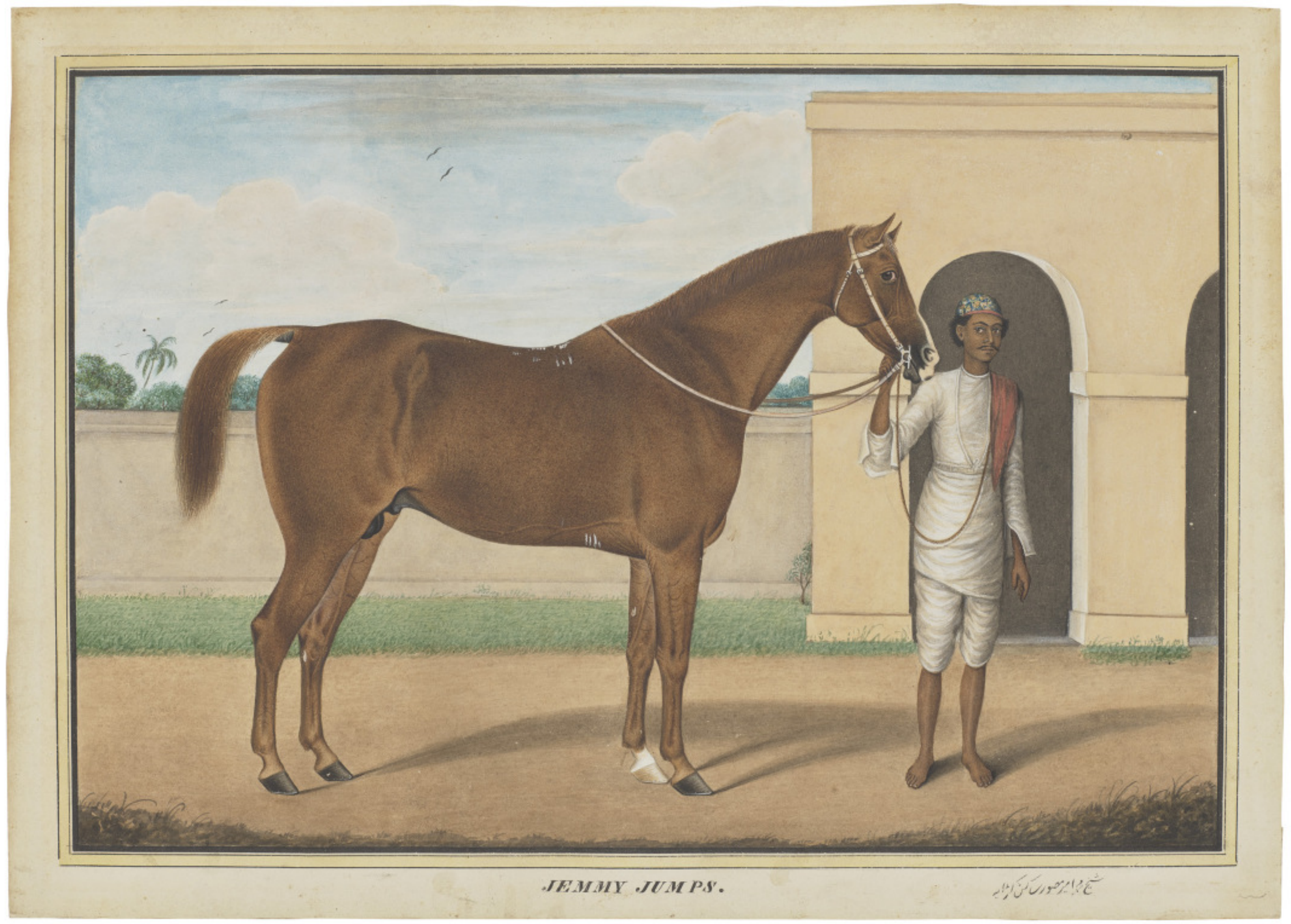
£20,000-30,000
US$28,000-41,000
€24,000-35,000

PROVENANCE:
Collection of Lord Lonsdale, Lowther Castle, Cumbria, England
Christie's London, *Visions of India*, 5 June 1996, lot 26

INSCRIPTIONS:
In the border below the painting 'Shekh Mohamud Ameer. Calcutta, at Karyah'
The reverse inscribed in pencil, 'From the collection of Lord Lonsdale, Lowther Castle'

Writing about Shaykh Muhammad Amir of Karraya, Stuart Cary Welch praised "his gently lyrical, accurately detailed, immaculately finished gouaches. Often touched by humour and whimsy ... his pictures also contain elements of sadness" (Welch 1978, p.68) In the present painting the immaculately finished stallion appears alert and engaged, whilst his groom seems to stare wistfully into the distance. Other than the main subject of the stallion and groom, it is interesting to note the outbuilding in the background. The door stands ajar and through it we glimpse two men, possibly other grooms or stable hands, in conversation. The inclusion of such details, especially figures, outside of the immediate foreground is extremely rare in Shaykh Muhammad Amir's known works.

Whilst it is not immediately clear who this painting was originally commissioned for, an inscription on the reverse in pencil identifies that it was formerly in the collection of Lowther Castle, Cumbria, which is the estate of the Earls of Lonsdale. The house was previously called Lowther Hall but rebuilt as a mock medieval castle in 1806. Given the date of our painting it possibly entered the Lowther castle collection during the time of William Lowther, 2nd Earl of Lonsdale (d. 1872) who inherited the castle in 1844. William Lowther was a prominent collector of antiquities and ancient works of art and so it is conceivable that he also acquired paintings for the castle's collection.


JEMMY JUMPS.

***62**

'JEMMY JUMPS'

SIGNED BY MUHAMMAD AMIR OF KARRAYA, CALCUTTA, INDIA, CIRCA 1840

Opaque pigments on card, set within black and yellow rules, with white margins, inscribed in English and Persian, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 11⅝ x 17¼in. (29.5 x 43.8cm.); folio 13¾ x 19⅜in. (35 x 49.1cm.)

£20,000-30,000
US$28,000-41,000
€24,000-35,000

PROVENANCE:
Probably commissioned by Capt. Alexander Hodges, Bengal, 1825-1841
Probably by descent to Henry Hodges Esq, before 1898, reputedly gifted to Mr Edward Leake, 1898
Spink and Son Ltd, London, 1993

INSCRIPTIONS:
The signature reads, 'Shaykh Muhammad Amir living in Karraya'

This impressively large stallion dwarfs his groom, who stands somewhat uneasily. Jemmy Jumps was undoubtedly at home on the racetrack as he is shod, which is not the case on the smaller stallion in the preceding lot. The white marks on the back and chest are perhaps scarring (which turns hair white on horses) from the racing saddle and girth. Similar marks can be seen on a bay racehorse painted by Shaykh Muhammad Amir sold at Sotheby's London, 27 October 2021, lot 6.

At the time the painting was acquired it was noted that the backboard of a previous frame, unfortunately no longer extant, was inscribed with information regarding the provenance and noting that "Alexander Hodges served in the 29th regiment of Native Infantry in Bengal, as lieutenant (1825-1834) and as captain (1835-1841)." The popularity of racehorse portraiture as a genre in Britain and by extension British Calcutta increased throughout the 18th century and the Calcutta Maidan racetrack was one of the city's most popular attractions (Harris 2019, p. 123).

The significance of horses to the likes of Captain Hodges went beyond simply leisure and were of practical military and official concern. Much as the Mughal emperors used hunting expeditions to ready an army for battle, a cavalryman could hone their technique and command of a stallion on the racetrack. The East India Company deemed Asiatic horses too small for their purposes and required thoroughbred stallions to be sent from England. For this purpose as stud farm in Essex was established between 1802-07 from which stallions, mares, colts and fillies were sent to India. A stud farm in Bengal was subsequently established in 1807 (Green 2025). On the aforementioned lost backboard Jemmy Jumps is identified as an Arab horse but is closer to an English thoroughbred in size and appearance. Although it is possible that Captain Hodges sent Jemmy Jumps to India from England, it could be that the stallion came from the Company stud in Bengal and is of the same stock that was originally bred in Essex.

THE ART OF A CRAFT: AN EXCEPTIONAL SERIES OF PAINTINGS ATTRIBUTED TO BISHAN SINGH FOR THE 1867 *EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE*

This series of eight paintings, which have not been on public display since 1988, embody the artistic achievements and historical significance of Kashmir in the third quarter of the 19th century. The scenes they illustrate, depicting the stages of manufacture of Kashmir shawls, capture the skill of those who took part in this complex operation. The high quality of the pictures speaks to the talent of Sikh painters in this period, which reached an apogee in the works of Bishan Singh. The paintings were displayed in Paris in 1867 to impress visitors to the *Exposition Universelle* – demonstrating the oversized role that Kashmir gained in the world economy in this period, due largely to European demand for shawls. This important series of paintings makes clear the unusual cultural and economic significance of Kashmir at this time.

THE HISTORY OF THE KASHMIR SHAWL

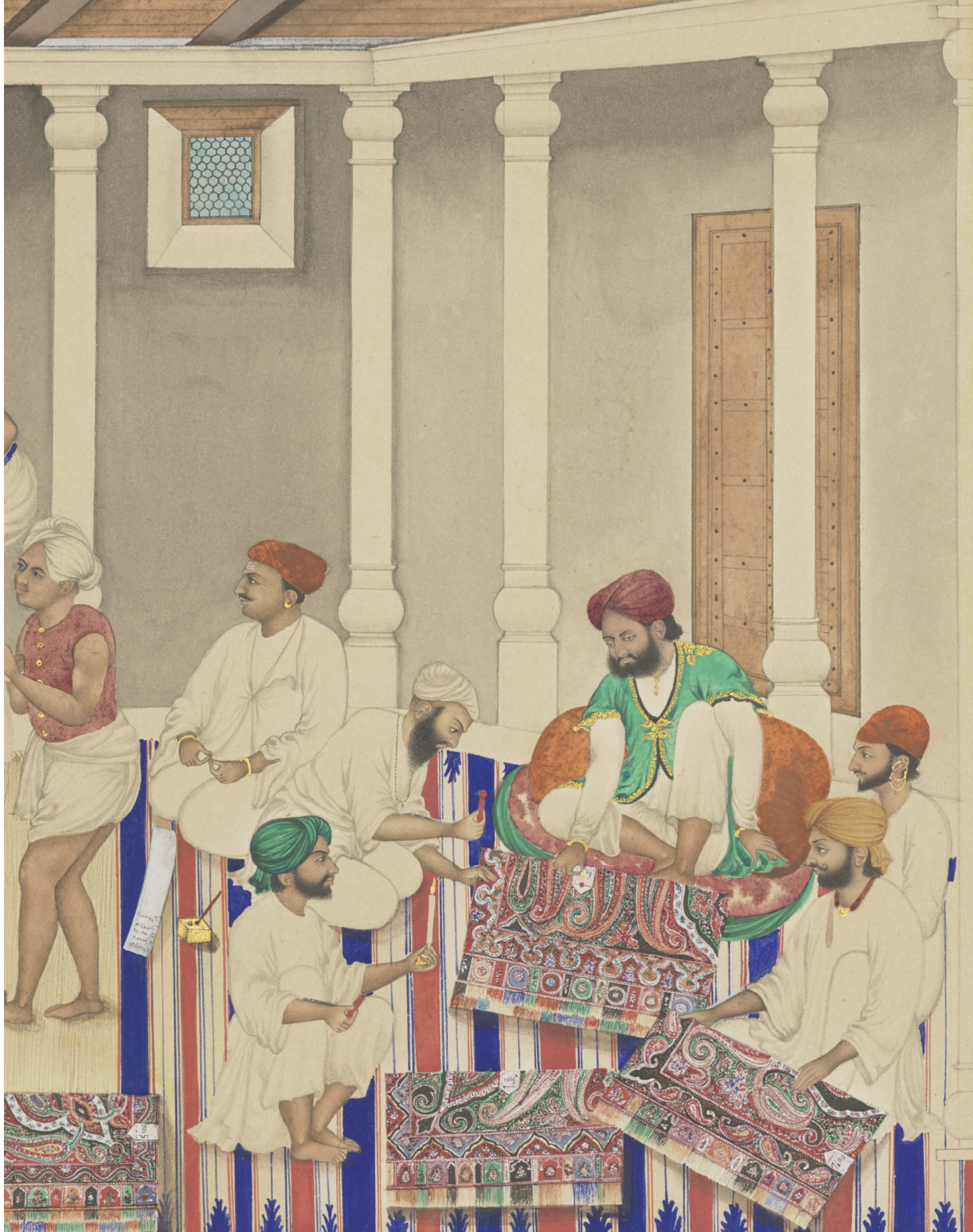
The manufacture of shawls in the far north of India has a long history, going back to well before the Mughal period. Even as he wrote the *Ain-i Akbari*, Abu Fazl records that 'in former times, shawls were often brought from Kashmir' and that during the reign of Akbar there were over a thousand shawl workshops in Lahore (Blochmann 1873, p.92). No shawls survive which can be securely dated to the period of the Great Mughals, and it is likely that they were quite different in appearance to later examples. The depiction of Jahangir meeting Prince Khurram in the Windsor *Padshahnama* features the vizier Itimad al-Dawla wearing a grey-green Kashmiri shawl around his shoulders (folio 194v.). Of the shawls themselves, Jahangir – never one to pass up an opportunity to praise beauty – wrote that in his lifetime the shawls of Kashmir were so famous that "there is no need to praise them" (Ames 1997, p.20).

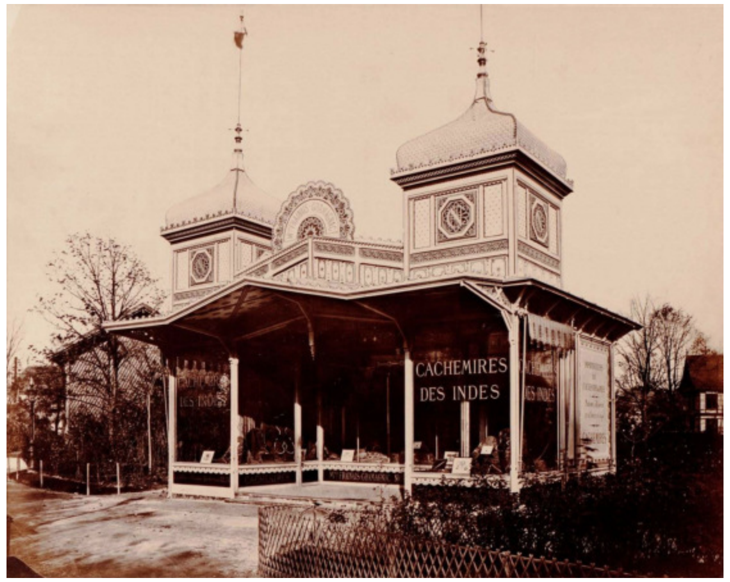
In 1664-5, Francois Bernier became the first recorded European to visit Kashmir and wrote that 'the staple commodity' of the region was already the shawl. He describes these shawls being 'a French *ell* and a half long [roughly two metres] and about an *ell* broad; ornamented at both ends with a sort of embroidery, made in the loom'. He also noted that at that time the wool being used was the fine down from the 'breast of a species of wild goat which inhabits the great Thibet region' (Bernier 1826, p.142). The combination of fine Tibetan wool and intricate decoration remained the distinctive features of Kashmir shawls over the next century. In the 18th century, Kashmir fell under the sway of Afghan rulers. During the governorate of Haji Dad Khan (1776-83), taxes were introduced both on the export of shawls and on looms themselves. This demonstrated both the size of the trade, since it offered a considerable source of wealth for the treasury in Kabul. However, the fallout from this new tax - which drove many weavers out of business - demonstrates the precarious existence of these weavers (Ames 1997, p.25).

The consolidation of the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh in the early 19th century put weavers on a surer footing. The court was insatiable in its demand for fine textiles: the tutor of prince Dalip Singh, John Login, wrote in 1849 that the young prince travelled with a retinue of tents lined with Kashmir shawls (Crill 1999, p.115). As well as creating more demand for shawls, the Sikh court introduced regulation to support workshop owners (*karkhandars*), such as banning weavers from seeking employment with rival workshops. Though this increased the penury of the weavers themselves, who were unable to bargain for better wages, it guaranteed a high rate of production. For much of the early 19th century, the tribute of Kashmir was paid to the Sikh court in shawls.

It was also in this period that Kashmir shawls came to be more fully appreciated beyond Northern India. The French traveller Victor Jacquemont noted that in the 1820s "for the most part, Kashmir shawls were bought by a small number of very wealthy Persians who export them to their native country" (Ames 1997, p.39). Slowly European merchants also began to take an interest, probably stimulated by Ranjit Singh's shrewd tactics of giving them away as gifts to visitors. According to Isabella Fane, in 1835 the palace at Lahore had several store rooms full of shawls "laid out on shelves and heaped in bales" ready to be presented to dignitaries (Crill 1999, p.118). Trade with France was particularly encouraged by Ranjit Singh's general Jean-Francois Allard, a soldier of fortune who also worked as an agent for French shawl importers, even passing on their designs to local weavers to make shawls which better suited the French taste (Ames 1997, p.44).

One of the earliest depictions of a shawl being worn in Europe is Jacque-Louis David's painting of the Marquise de Sourcy de Thélusson, completed in the early stages of the French Revolution in 1790. Napoleon's first wife, the empress Josephine, was often painted wearing a shawl; when he married his second wife, Napoleon made her a gift of 17 shawls (Lévi-Strauss 1987, p.16). Though Kashmiri *karkhandars* doubtless benefitted from this expanding demand, soon they found themselves having to navigate the complexities of the world market. Tastes might change suddenly, forcing quick adaptation. The new fashion for broader skirts in the 1820s, for instance, meant that ladies no longer wanted long shawls to drape around their arms, but instead wanted square shawls to drape over their shoulders. They also faced increase competition from machine-made European shawls, which had the effect of depressing wages and necessitated the weaving of poorer-quality shawls to keep up. Finally, they were also prey to the vagaries of the global economy. The collapse of demand for shawls in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war caused devastation in Kashmir, and exacerbated a disastrous famine in 1877.





Pavilion of Frainais-Gramagnac, *Exposition Universelle*, Paris, 1867.
Archives Nationales, CP/F/12/11872/1, p.58

THE 1867 EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE

The 1867 *Exposition Universelle* was one of the most important of a series of World Fairs which took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. It was intended as a demonstration of the industrial achievements of the last decades, and particularly those effected in France in the age of Napoleon III. The National Pavilions gave space for countries to show something of their national culture: exhibits ranged from the Siberian *isbas* of the Russian delegation, the quasi-pharaonic 'Temple of Athor', and a reproduction of a Tunisian palace. In addition, private designers and retailers were given the opportunity to erect temporary pavilions in the Champs de Mars, which was open to visitors until 11 pm thanks to the recent invention of electric lighting.

The *Exposition* came at a time when the fashion for Kashmir shawls was approaching its peak in Europe. There were four pavilions which exhibited shawls at the exposition. They represented the firms of the Oulmann brothers, Cheuvreux-Aubertot, Frainais-Gramagniac, and Verdé-Delisle, or Compagnie des Indes. Though it was the last of these which was awarded a gold medal by the judges, a contemporary magazine noted that it was exceptionally hard to distinguish between them (*L'Exposition Universelle* 1867, p.173). As well as shawls made in Kashmir, many exhibited cheaper European-made shawls, which could be made by industrial looms in Paris, Lyons, and Nimes. Yet, as a contemporary English observer noted, 'the French shawl never falls in the soft, elegant folds of the true Cashmere' (Palliser 1867, p.244).

Exact information on where our paintings are likely to have been displayed is provided by evidence in the contemporary press. An issue of *Le Monde Illustrée,* published on 26 January 1867 included an article about the shawl industry in Kashmir. It was illustrated with three prints depicting darners at work, shawls being washed, and weavers at their looms, each strikingly similar to the compositions of paintings from our series (De Bernard 1867, see lot 69). The article mentions that these were reproductions of four 'original drawings' provided by Frainais-Gramagnac, and that those drawings are the work of a Kashmiri artist, who unfortunately is unnamed. According to the article, Frainais-Gramagnac had workshops in Amritsar and Srinagar, suggesting that the paintings may depict the shawls being made in either of those places.

Frainais-Gramagnac were established in 1825, and by the time of the *exposition* their premises at 82 and 84 Rue Richelieu was one of the leading French importers of Kashmir shawls. Their pavilion was located in a shaded corner of the Champ de Mars, leading one commentator to ask why the organisers of the *exposition* should 'bury one of the most beautiful private exhibitions in a corner of the park?' (*L'Exposition Universelle* 1867, p.295). The pavilion was topped by fanciful Indian-style domes, and is depicted in both prints and a surviving photograph in an album in the Archive Nationale, Paris, illustrated here. It shows the glass-fronted pavilion, in which six picture frames are just visible at the foot of the display.

Evidence from the paintings themselves suggest that this series was indeed commissioned together, and intended for display alongside one another. The series consists of six smaller paintings (lots 64-7, 69-70) and two larger (lots 63 and 68). All have blue double-rules around the scene. Seven of them are numbered in the margins below the painting in black ink in the same hand. To the verso, all the paintings apart from lot 63 are labelled in pencil in a 19th century French hand. The labels are somewhat enigmatic: all are labelled with the number 39.55, apart from lot 68 which is labelled 52.15. Given that lot 68 is a larger painting, it is possible that these are prices, with the biggest picture as the most expensive. There is also the repeated word Bleuté, possibly the name of a former owner or even an agent for Frainais-Gramagnac. Even if the inscriptions are highly cryptic, they do indicate that these pictures have been together for a long time, and strengthen the likelihood that they were commissioned together.

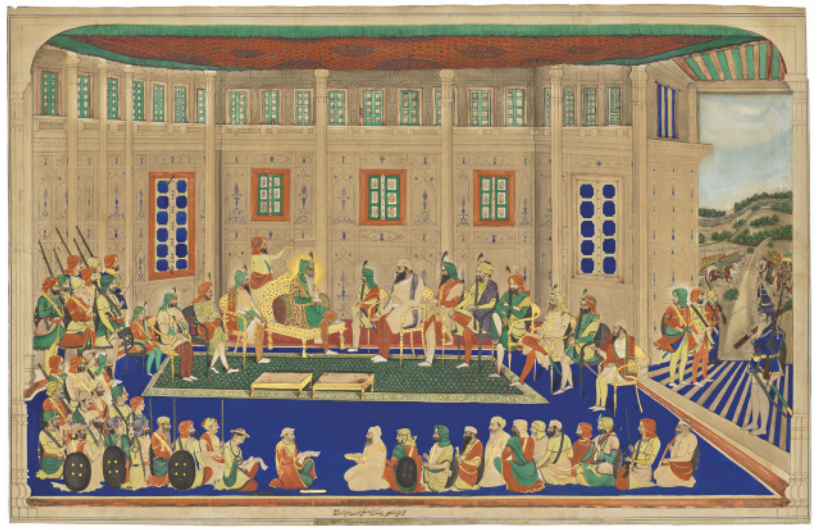
In the context of the *exposition*, these paintings would have been an effective piece of marketing. As mentioned above, the greatest commercial threat facing firms like Frainais-Gramagnac were machine-made shawls from France, Austria, and the UK. These paintings would have served to emphasise how labour-intensive the process of manufacturing these shawls was, creating products of a quality which could not be imitated. They may also have allayed fears that production standards were slipping as workshops tried to increase production to compete. The depiction of beautiful interiors, sumptuous costumes, and verdant landscapes also would have served to emphasise the exotic allure of genuine Kashmir shawls, in contrast to those made in factories in and around Paris.

THE ARTIST

There is strong circumstantial and stylistic evidence to suggest that these paintings are the work of the artist Bishan Singh, regarded as the leading Sikh artist of the second half of the 19th century. We first hear of him in an 1872 text by Baden Henry Powell, which recorded objects displayed in the 1864 Punjab exhibition of arts and industry, Lahore. Among the paintings were nine by 'Bishan Singh of Amritsar', including depictions of a carriage, the court of Ranjit Singh, the Municipal Committee of Amritsar, and six depictions of the stages of shawl production, including weaving; cleaning; darning and part joining; pressing; washing; and dyeing. In the catalogue they are described in the singular – for instance, 'the shawl weaver' – making it unlikely that those paintings were the same as our series. Far more likely they were single figures: an unsigned portrait of a shawl darner sold Christie's New York, 20 March 2024, lot 561, may well be one from that group. Nonetheless, Powell's catalogue establishes the fact that Bishan Singh did paint scenes of shawl makers, and that these may have provided the basis for other works: indeed, the figure in that portrait bears a close facial resemblance to the weaver on the left of the group in lot 66. According to Powell, a representative of the shawl importers Oulman brothers was present at the Punjab exhibition. It is likely that Frainais-Gramagnac would also have sent an agent (Powell 1872, p.44). Seeing Bishan Singh's single-figure paintings may have inspired such an agent to commission a series of larger compositions, especially after Bishan Singh's work was recognised with a medal from the exhibition's judges.

A decade after the Lahore exhibition, Bishan Singh was still painting shawl weavers. This we know thanks to a painting now in the Musée Guimet, Paris, signed by Bishan Singh and dated to *Samvat* 1931/1874-5 AD (MAO12702). Like the darner mentioned above, the vignettes in this single painting are very similar to some from our series: the portly *Naqqash* looking straight down at his design in the Guimet painting appears in the centre of lot 63; the three weavers recur on the left hand side of lot 64; and the two men proudly holding up a completed shawl also appear on the left of our lot 68. Moreover, the arcaded interior with a slatted roof, open windows on the far wall, and the rush matting on the floor are features shared with interior paintings in our series. The Guimet painting shows a condensed timeline of Kashmir shawl production, bringing different parts of several paintings of this series into one composition. If both the darner and this painting were the work of Bishan Singh in 1864 and 1874, then our series falls in between the two, making the case for him as the artist of this series highly probable.

Stylistic connections also point to Bishan Singh's hand at work in these paintings. The manner in which three-dimensional space is structured around a back wall perpendicular to the viewer, with a vanishing point clearly indicated by the orientation of the side walls, is reminiscent of paintings such as the depiction of the Amritsar Municipal Committee, which sold in these Rooms, 31 March 2022, lot 98. The palette of these paintings is also in Bishan Singh's style: in particular, the same strong green pigments, most clearly seen in the depiction of the *rafugars* at work, were employed to paint Ranjit Singh in *durbar* in a painting which sold in these Rooms, 31 March 2022, lot 97. The architectural detail in the background of that painting, in common with many of the paintings in the present series, makes extensive use of unpainted space, with line details added to the plain surface. Further stylistic similarities with Bishan Singh's works, more specific to each painting, will be indicated in the lot notes through the subsequent lots.



Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Durbar, Bishan Singh, probably Amritsar, North India, dated VS 1940 / 1883-4 AD, sold in these Rooms, 31 March 2022, lot 97

***63**

SHAWL DESIGNERS (*NAQQASH*) AT WORK

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 15¼ x 20⅜in. (38.6 x 51.8cm.); folio 18⅞ x 23⅞in. (47.9 x 60.6cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.1, pp.12-13

INSCRIPTIONS:
A partially-effaced inscription in the lower margin reads 'No. [...] showing shawl artists'

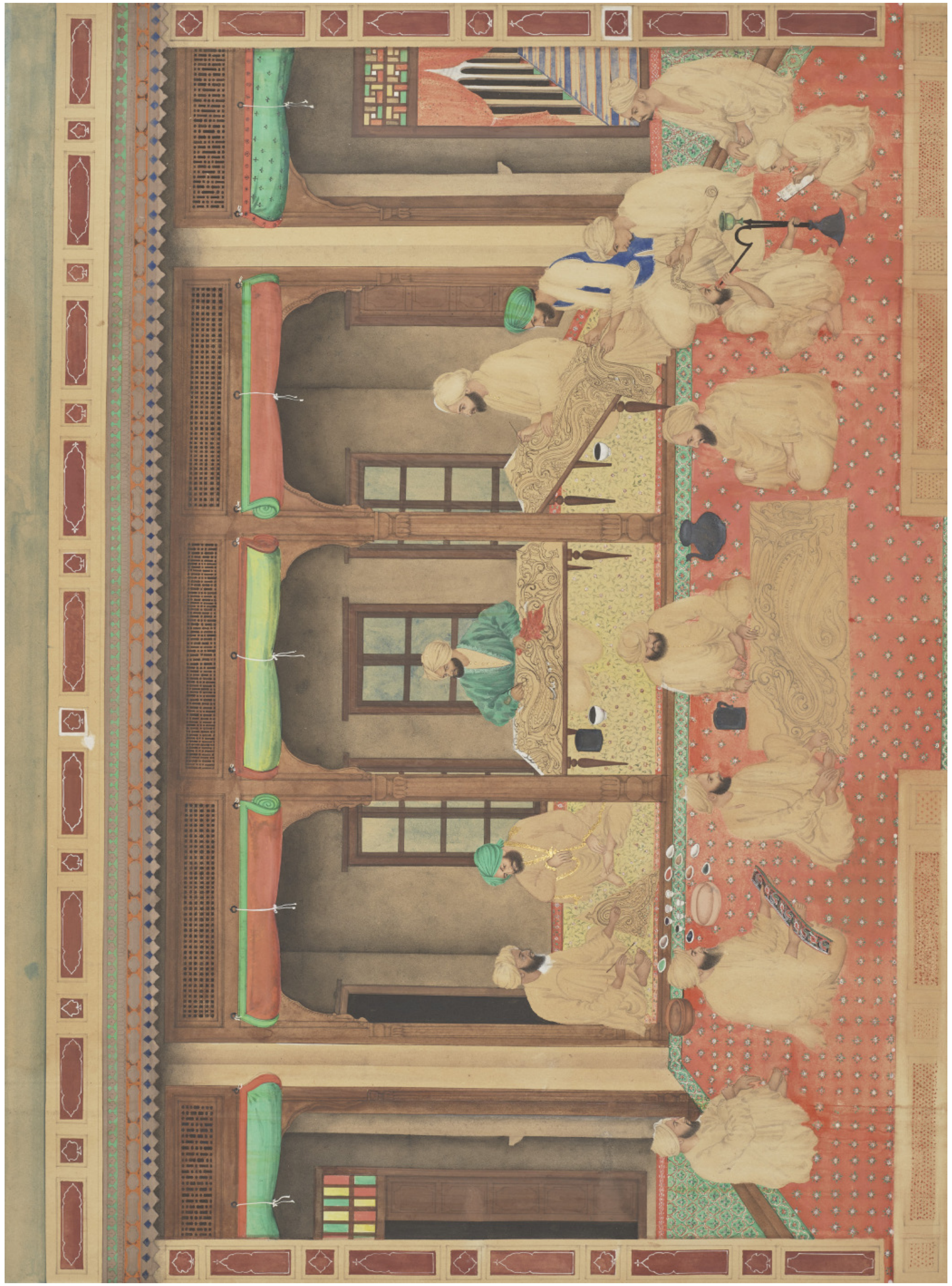
The preparation of precise and accurate sketches was essential if weavers were to produce shawls of repeatable design and quality. This was the responsibility of the *Naqqash*. The drawings they produced were full-scale, intended to be used as a constant reference by weavers. In 1831, the French traveller Victoire Jacquemont recorded that in Ludhiana weavers could be seen constantly "glancing at a pen and ink pattern tracing which shows the shape of the pines he is weaving", adding that through repeated use the paper designs had become "well-thumbed and greasy" (Levi-Strauss 1986, p.185). Forty years later, shortly after the Paris exhibition at which these paintings were displayed, the Anglo-Hungarian linguist William Gottleib Leitner described how before weaving began, "a plan (*naska*) of the specimen of the shawl required is first drawn upon paper, and flowers of various colours are depicted". According to him, "the specimen plan whose length and breadth are equal to those of the warp are then fixed underneath so as to allow the drawing to be seen through the warp" (Ames 1997, p.70). These designs were therefore intended to be set into the looms and used by weavers as they worked.

The designs themselves show only quarters of shawls: this likely reflects the fact that weavers often would have prepared the four quarters separately to be brought together later by the *rafugar* (see lot 66). It is also notable that the designs are not extensively coloured. Only in the group to the top right are pigments added, and there only in small swatches rather than fully painted. In fact, most Kashmir shawl weavers worked from monochrome designs. Though the *naqqash* might draw the designs, deciding on colours was the work of the *turuhguru*. Before weavers began work, according to Moorcroft the *turuhguru* would 'point out the disposition of the colours beginning at the foot of the pattern and calling out the colour, the number of threads along which it is to extend, that by which it is to be followed, and so on in succession.' This would be recorded by the *talimguru,* who used a 'kind of shorthand' to indicate which colours would be used and for how many rows (Moorcroft 1823, p.16). These cryptic documents would then be used by weavers in conjunction with the larger designs to create a shawl with the desired combination of form and colour.

Many of those interested in Kashmir shawls were keen to study and acquire original designs. However, though the intrepid Moorcroft was able to obtain many samples of weaving and pieces of equipment, the drawings eluded him. He was particularly frustrated to have failed to obtain "patterns which were in the possession of an individual two centuries ago from whom they have descended through a race of pattern drawers in regular succession to a very intelligent individual who at this day pursues the occupation" (Moorcroft 1823, p.40). Perhaps we need not be too surprised that this 'individual' was not willing to part with drawings that had been preserved for so long, especially to an outsider like Moorcroft. It may also reflect that these drawings were considered commercially sensitive, and the *naqqash* did not want any of their trade secrets to fall into the hands of competitors. The Victoria and Albert Museum's first keeper of the Indian Section, Caspar Purdon Clarke, was more successful on a purchasing tour of India in 1880-2, and designs he purchased in Srinagar were presented to the museum in 1924 - most of them are uncoloured (acc.no.IM.29-1924; 32-1924; 30-1924).

The palatial interior is worthy of comment. The finely-carved wooden columns, large patterned carpets, and even stained glass above the doors to each side of the painting suggest that the *naqqash* operated in luxurious conditions. When cataloguing this drawing in 1988, Veronica Murphy particularly noted the 'European-style' legs of the table upon which the designers work as a sign of their prosperity (Murphy 1988, p.12). This is probably a reflection of the higher status of the *naqqash* among shawl workers. They received the highest pay of anyone involved in the industry, claiming as much as eight times the daily wage of a weaver (Irwin 1974. P.7). The setting may also have offered an opportunity for Bishan Singh to show his talents at painting grand interiors - the space of this painting is evocative of the room in which the Amritsar Municipal Committee meet in a painting sold in these Rooms, 31 March 2022, lot 98. It should be noted that the same group of three figures, with one man looking straight down at his drawing, appear in the signed Bishan Singh painting in the Musée Guimet.

Bishan Singh conveys the lively atmosphere of the workshop in the present painting. As some work, others watch over shoulders, or discuss the next move. This is a multi-generational workplace, with a strong sense of hierarchy. The two figures sat at tables are evidently the most senior. Two younger men also work on drawings, but are sat on floor. Finally, in the lower right corner of the scene, sits a young boy working on a wooden board. So fine is the detail of the painting, that legible on the board are the repeated identical boteh-like motifs which the boy has drawn on the board. Only after years of practice, and watching his elders work, would the boy graduate to full-scale drawings. The evident hierarchy of this painting, with apparently senior workers to young apprentices arranged according to their status, continues through the series.



***64**

SHAWL WEAVERS (*SHALBAF*) AT WORK

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigment heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules,
the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9⅜ x 16⅛in. (23.8 x 41cm.); folio 13⅜ x 20¼in. (34 x 51.5cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.2, pp.14-15

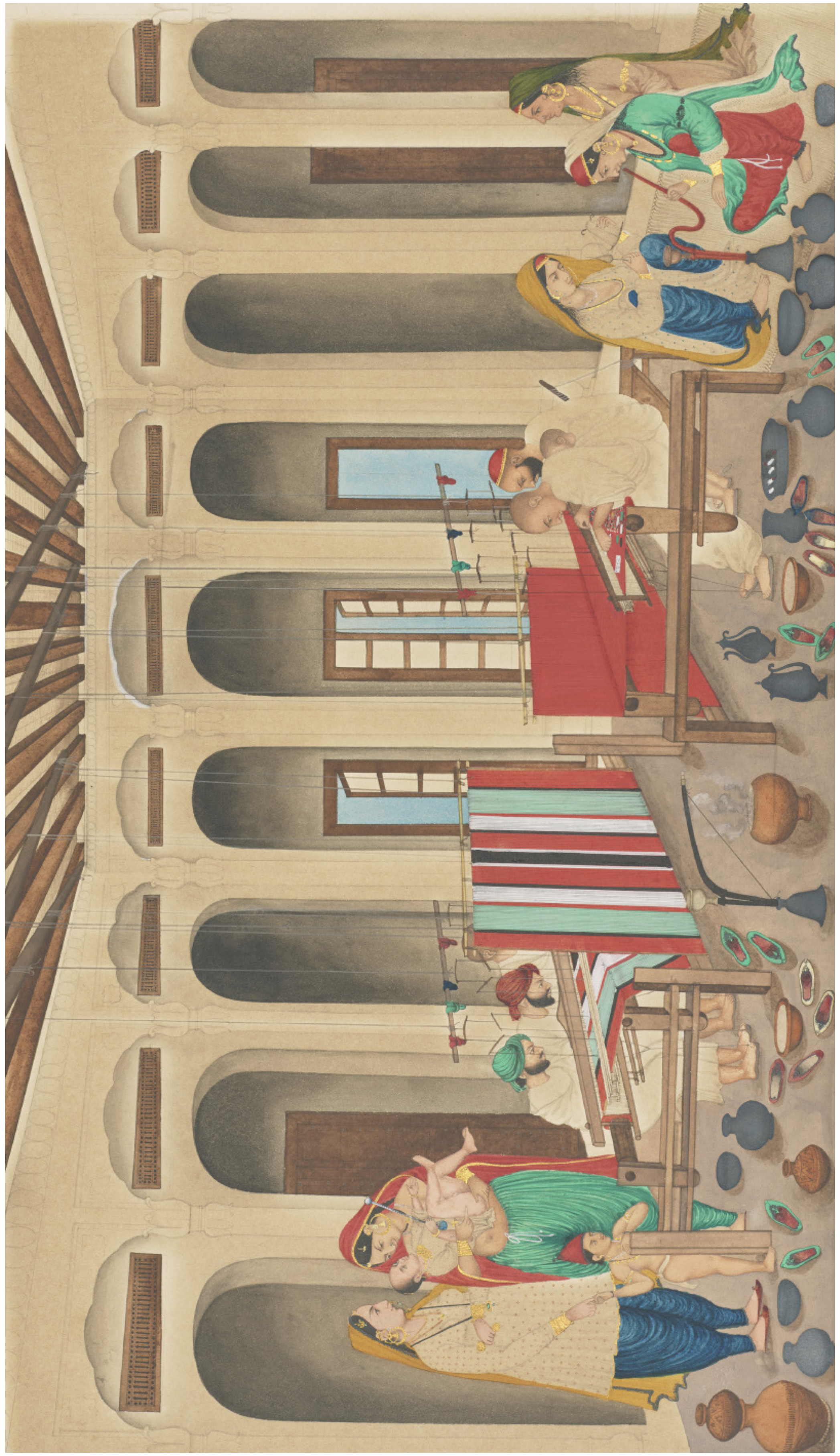
This scene shows workers engaging in weaving tapesty shawls. This required them to shoot coloured wefts into prepared warps, creating blocks of colour through building up layers of fine dyed wool threads. It was a task requiring total concentration: in 1831 Jacquemont recorded weavers skilfully manipulating "at least seventy bobbins" (Levi-Strauss 1987, p.185). It also used the whole body: the loom was kept under tension with a system of pulleys controlled by the weavers' feet. Visible in minute detail below the hands of the bald figure at the loom on the right, the beginnings of a shawl start to come to life beneath their fingers. Bishan Singh has captured the intent gazes of all of the weavers at work, with the red-turbaned figure leaning in slightly closer than the others as though negotiating a particularly challenging section.

The painting shows all the component parts of the loom, with a rotating wooden beam positioned next to the weavers upon which the completed shawl could be slowly rolled up. The warps would be prepared in advance. It was vitally important that the warps be as strong as possible, since any breaks would require careful repair work in order to reinsert a new warp. So each thread was dressed, thickly coated in a gelatinous solution of rice and water. These stiff wool lengths were then threaded onto the frame ready for weaving. In her 1988 catalogue, Murphy suggested that the striped warps on the left may have been for a striped textile. However, many Kashmir shawls were woven on striped warps, which become invisible from the face once the shawl is complete. These stripes may have helped a weaver navigate the warps, as well as leaving the 'Harlequin' finish characteristic of these textiles. A similar striped warp pattern can be seen on an illustration of warps being prepared in a 19th century painting album in the British Library (Add.Or.1704).

The manner in which shawls were woven was described painstakingly by Moorcroft. He recorded that the weavers would work on the reverse of the shawls. When a colour-change was required, the weft threads would overlap slightly to leave a slightly ridge on the reverse but no obvious join on the face. Having completed a new row, the work would be checked by the most senior weaver and then "the comb is brought down upon it with a vigour and repetition of stroke, which to a spectator not much conversant with the subject appear disproportionately great compared to the delicacy of the materials" (Moorcroft 1823, p.17). It was an immensely time consuming process. According to Moorcroft, if weavers worked without pause they might expect to complete 'half the length of a barley corn' in a day, and a whole shawl between 3 and 18 months depending on how extensively decorated they were.

Bishan Singh accurately reproduces the layout of a weaving workshop (*dukan*) as we understand it from contemporary texts. According to both Moorcroft and Jacquemont, three weavers would work at each loom, with one senior weaver accompanied by two juniors. According to Jacquemont, "the man seated in the centre is the most highly skilled", enabling him to keep an eye on both of his colleagues at once (Levi-Strauss 1987, p.185). By contrast, according to Moorcroft the most experienced would sit on the left, and will be responsible for the work of the other two, and pay their wages himself (Moorcroft 1823, p.17). In this painting, the group on the right seem to have put the youngest weaver in the middle, perhaps in order that both of his colleagues could supervise him at once. Moorcroft also suggested that it was normal for looms to be set up so closely together. Looms were placed "as near to each other as possible' so that an overseer could 'see the progress of the business of each loom at one glance" and so that the air remained "sufficiently warm to prevent the workmen having their fingers chilled" (Moorcroft 1823, p.16).

The presence of two groups of women in the scene deserves comment, given that weaving was considered an entirely male occupation. The woman in an orange shawl on the right of the scene seems to be engaged in preparing a skein of yarn for the weavers, unreeling a hand-bobbin onto a small wooden frame. It is possible that the others are also on standby should assistance be needed, or should the weavers require any more equipment. Strewn across the floor are additional pieces of paraphernalia. These include many pots and ewers, delicately realised using silver pigment and minutely pricked. One of these vessels on the right apparently contains small bobbins of white yarn, while one on the other side contains a pale substance, possibly the rice solution alluded to above. In the middle of the room is a *huqqa* pipe for a moment of leisure, and a smoking terracotta pot. This may well be the 'pot filled with burning charcoal' which Moorcroft noted was brought into the workshop on cold winter days (Moorcroft 1822, p.42).



***65**

DYERS (*RUNGREZ*) PREPARING PLAIN-COLOURED SHAWLS

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9⅞ x 16⅛in. (25.2 x 41cm.); folio 34.9 x 50.8cm. (13¾ x 20in.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

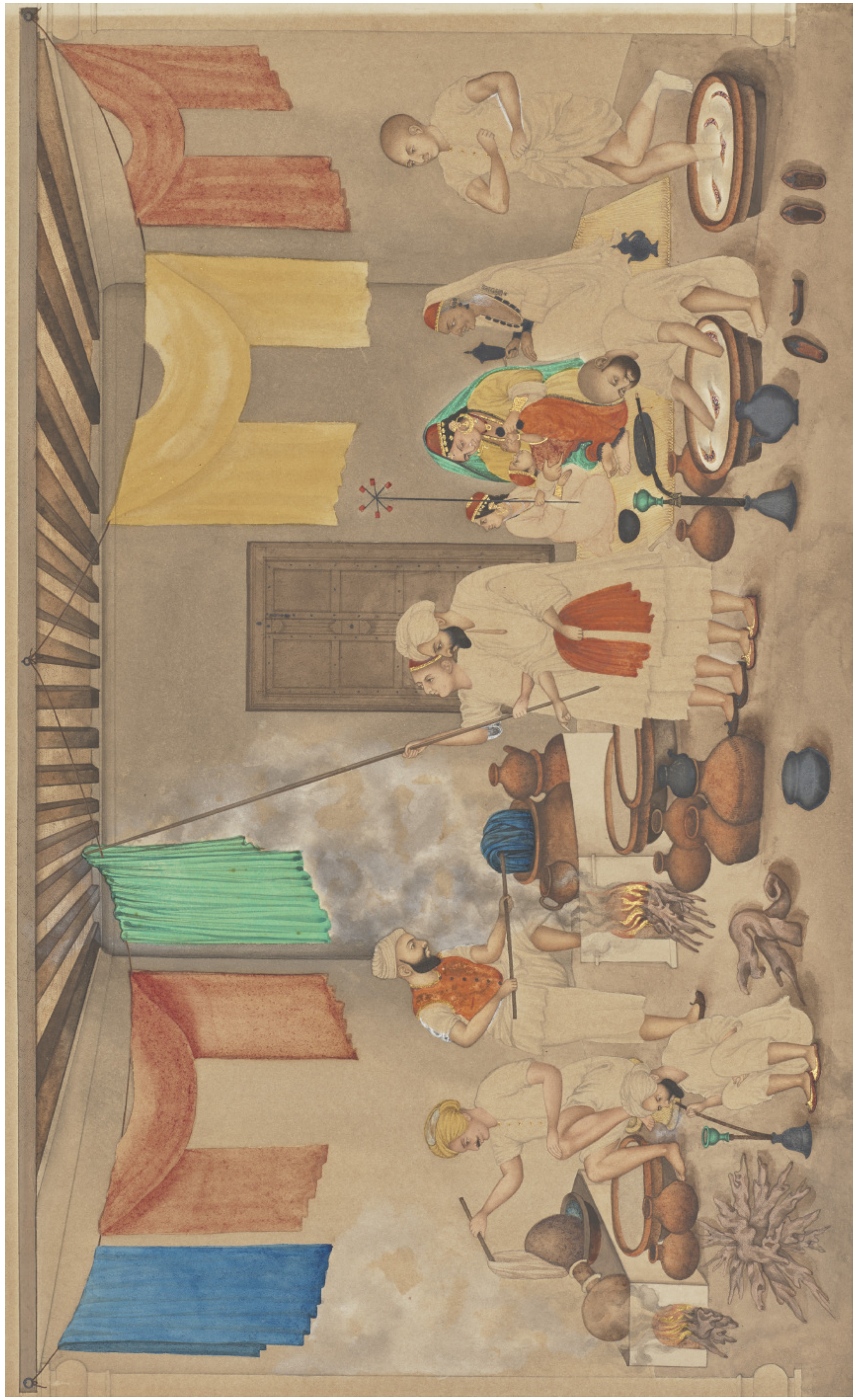
LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.3, pp.16-17

This scene depicts various activities taking place in a smoky room as brightly-coloured plain shawls hang above. Tapestry-woven shawls of the type discussed in the previous note had to be dyed in the thread: Moorcroft described how a *talimguru* (see lot 63) would advise a weaver on the exact amount of thread of each colour needed to make a particular shawl (Moorcroft 1823, p.9). However, in the early 19th century shawl-makers beginning to experiment with the possibility of dyeing shawls once they were woven. These could be embroidered or left completely plain. The English cricketer and traveller Thomas Vigne referred to the latter when he wrote of how *Alwan*, as the shawl stuff is called when free from ornament, is not often, if ever, made up by Kashmiri weavers of the natural colour of the *pashm* [wool], and may be, of course, dyed of any colour, red, blue, green, yellow, &c.' (Vigne 1842, p.128).

The figures on the left of the scene are engaged in dyeing plain shawls. The same equipment appears in an album of the trades of the Punjab in the British Library (Add.Or.1704), which shows a man with a long stick dipping a blue textile into a pot above a flame. In that painting, the man visibly perspires and his hands are stained blue by the indigo. In our painting, Bishan Singh paints a more composed figure, who calmly leans forward over his work, his hands only slightly stained. Nonetheless, the gold-painted fire and the thick column of smoke which rises from it gives a sense of this uncomfortable, hot, and presumably odorous workshop. To the right of him, a younger man arranges freshly-dyed shawls on a line. As in the previous scenes in the series, he may be an apprentice: according to Moorcroft dyeing was a closely-guarded industry, in which the workers would "bring up their sons and relations to the trade but admit not strangers" (Moorcroft 1823, p.9). The figure to the left seems to be putting an undyed white cloth into blue dye for the first time. The large vessel in the bowl may be intended to squeeze excess dye out of the cloth, or to grind up the substances in the dye. According to Moorcroft, Kashmir shawl makers in his day had access to 64 different dyes, derived from various mineral and vegetal sources. The blue dye in this painting would have been made from indigo strengthened with sulphuric acid. Green dyes were derived from boiling European textiles and extracting the dye. Yellow was obtained by suspending a shawl above burning sulphur (Ames 1997, p.78). These strong chemicals would have made the life of a dyer a hazardous one.

The two figures on the right of the scene wash and tread some shawls in bowls of translucent liquid. The edges of the shawls have been shown emerging from the water, and appear intricately coloured. This suggests that these are shawls that have already been decorated. These may well represent embroidered shawls, rather than the tapestry-woven ones depicted being woven in the last scene. Murphy suggested that these are being treated in *ritha* (soap-nut) solution in order to soften them, perhaps before being embroidered further (Murphy 1988, p.16). Moorcroft, however, indicated that "shawl goods are washed in clear cold water, using soap cautiously to white parts alone and abstaining from applying it to those which are embroidered" (Moorcroft 1823, p.20). Either way, depicting newly-dyed shawls being washed may have served a specific purpose at the 1867 Exposition. As early as 1831, Jacquemont had raised concerns about "very mediocre dyes" being used in shawls, which faded after a single wash (Ames 1997, p.78). The two figures included in this painting, therefore, may have been intended to allay any fears that the dyes were not fast.

As in other paintings in the series, the workers in this scene are accompanied by a small group of women, including a breastfeeding mother, who sit on a reed mat similar to that on the floor in lot 63. In the left corner, a man finds a few moments of relaxation with a *huqqa* pipe amid the frenetic activity around him. Of all the scenes in the series, the interior of this one is the most basic. Only the door has any kind of decoration, and even that is sparse. This is the only scene in the series in which there are no windows: the darkness may have been intended to protect the colours as they soaked into the textiles, but further contributes to the atmosphere of this particularly insalubrious phase of the manufacturing process.



***66**

DARNERS AND EMBROIDERERS (*RAFUGAR*) AT WORK

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9⅛ x 16⅜in. (23.3 x 41.6cm.); folio 13 x 23¾in. (33.1 x 51.1cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.5, pp.20-1

In this scene, the shawls which were either woven or dyed in the previous two scenes are brought closer to completion thanks to the skill of the *rafugar,* a term which broadly applied to people skilled in needlework. This was a role that had barely existed before the 19th century: it seems that their main function was the repair of damaged shawls, or of warps which had become broken in the course of weaving (Levi-Strauss 1987, p.15). According to Moorcroft, only a short while before he wrote his account there were so few *rafugars* that the government did not even tax them. However, as the shawl industry became more commercialised they grew in number. Many found that training as a *rafugar* was easier than learning to weave. According to Moorcroft it took a two-year apprenticeship to become a shawl weaver, but becoming a *rafugar* required only two months of study. Consequently "many men applied themselves to learn the latter business after their beards had been bleached by age", and that even "their children are enabled to contribute towards the support of the family by their labour in this line" (Moorcroft 1823, p.33). This reference is neatly reflected by the group of weavers to the right of the painting, which include an old man and two youths.

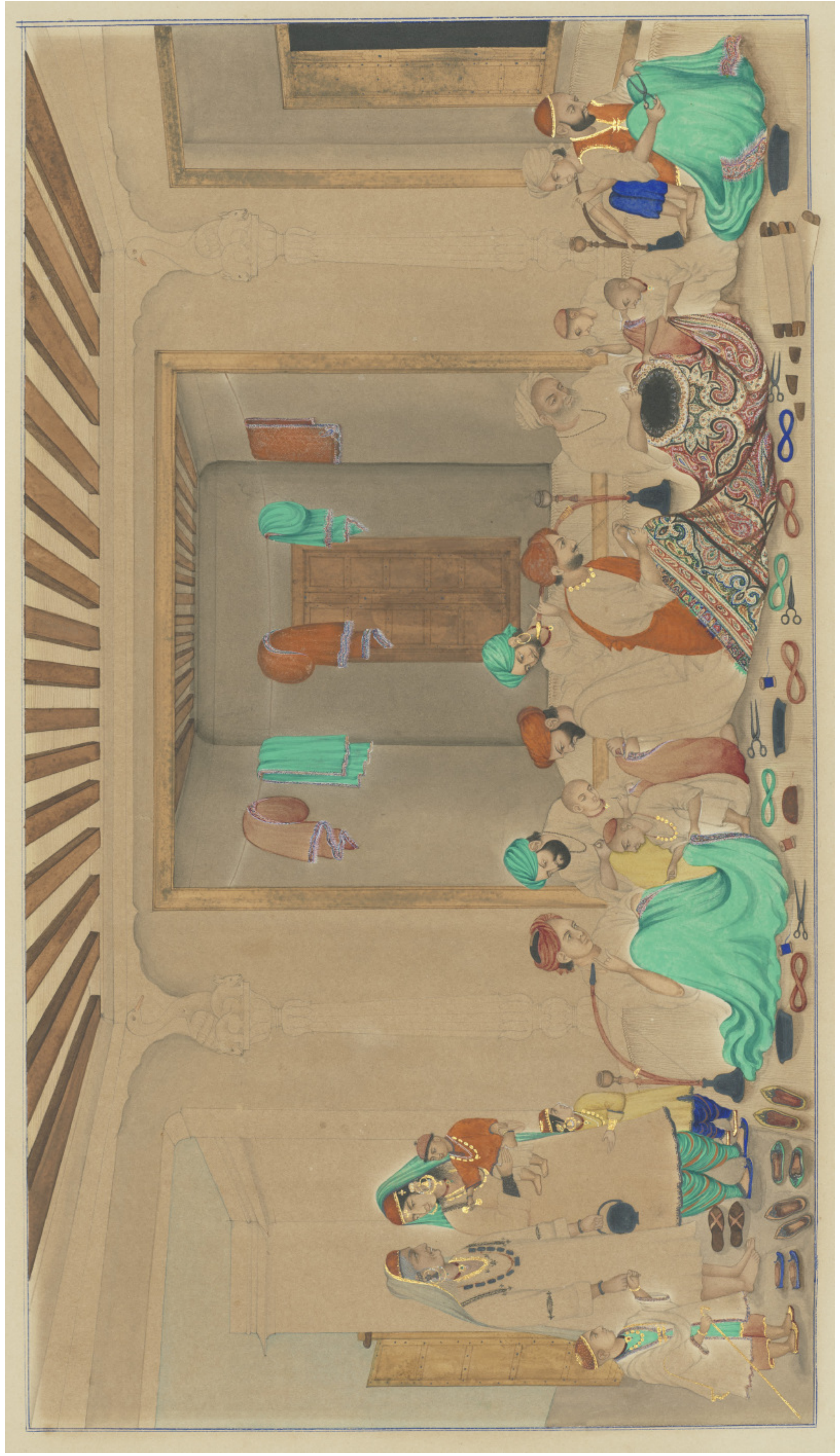
The first significant change that increased the role of the *rafugar* was that shawls begun to be woven in parts, and then assembled later. Weavers would deliberately leave unfinished threads at the edges of the shawl so that they could be attached to other parts (Levi-Strauss 1987, p.19). This practice had begun by Moorcroft's day, since he recorded that when a shawl is required "to be got up quickly", the work would be "divided amongst several shops and the different pieces are sown [sic] together by the Ruffoogar so that the joining cannot be perceived" (Moorcroft 1823, p.17). The need for a quicker rate of production was sharpened thanks to the high output of European steam-driven looms, and consequently the practice became more widespread as the century continued. This was noticed by European buyers. In 1867, the Art Journal's review of the *Exposition Universelle* commented that "the numerous seams required in these shawls to unite the different pieces that compose them offer an ungraceful aspect scarcely consistent with the *elegantes* they adorn". The paper added however, that since those seams did not appear on European made shawls, they "become often a 'quality' instead of a defect in the eyes of the purchaser" (Palliser 1868, p.246).

By the time of the *Exposition Universelle*, it seems to have become the norm. In the 1867 article from *le Monde Illustré* in which paintings from this series are illustrated, Leo de Bernard wrote that the *shalbaf* would only assemble "a part of the shawl", which would then be assembled by the *rafugars* (De Bernard, 1867, p.55). This crucial stage in the assembly of shawls was illustrated in the article with an engraving by Charles Maurand, very similar in its detail to the present picture. One specific detail given by De Bernard is that the work of the *rafugars* was overseen by the "oldest and most capable" among them. In our picture, there is a clear hierarchy within the groups working on each shawl, with an older man sat between younger workers. The detail is so clear that in the group on the right, the figures are clearly working on a line down the vertical axis on the shawl, indicating that they are indeed engaged in assembling the pieces.

The second change which increased the role of the *rafugar* was the rise of the embroidered, or *amli,* shawl. In the early 19th century, an enterprising Armenian merchant called Khwaja Yusuf and a weaver called Ali Baba identified that shawls could be made much faster and cheaper if they were embroidered, rather than using the traditional tapestry-weave technique. These would also not be liable for government duties, meaning that they could be sold for one-third of the price (Irwin 1974, p.3). Though intended as a cost-saving measure, Moorcroft was greatly impressed by the quality of embroidered shawls: he wrote that they were "more lively in colour" than traditional shawls, but also "less raised and more solid" than most embroidery thanks to the use of twill-tapestry weaving (Moorcroft 1832, p.32). Often the decoration was confined only to the borders of a plain dyed shawl. An example is depicted in *A Pedlar selling shawls to Ladies in the Troyes region,* an 1837 painting by Henri Valton (Levi-Strauss 1987, p.36). The precision with which the scene has been painted makes it clear that those done in 1837 working on the dyed shawls are entirely engaged in embroidery to the borders.

The relative ease with which *amlikar* shawls could be produced is reflected by the fact that there are three being worked on at once in this scene, and five more hanging behind them, while there is only one tapestry-woven shawl visible. It is easy to see why shawl workers would prefer embroidery to tapestry weaving. According to Moorcroft, a *rafugar* engaged in embroidery could earn between five and twelve *pice* a day, while tapestry weavers rarely made more than three *pice* (Moorcroft 1823, p.15). The more comfortable station of the *rafugars* is reflected by the elegant interior: elaborate columns with carved swans are engaged into the wall on two sides, and rush matting extends across the whole room. The group of women and children in the corner are finely dressed, with one of the children apparently carrying a small cane.

The black-bearded figure on the left of the group has a face very similar to the figure in the portrait of a darner attributed to Bishan Singh which sold Christie's New York, 20 March 2024, lot 561. The setting of that scene is also very similar, including the same rush matting, colonnaded setting, and decorated wooden door. In both scenes, bolts of white cloth of yarn are strewn on the floor around wooden planks: only on the present painting, however, does one of these poke out of the painted panel and into the margin: the only instance of any painting in this series in which the scene breaks out of the frame.



*67

SHAWL FINISHERS (*PURUSGAR*) REMOVING LOOSE THREADS FROM SHAWLS

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9⅛ x 16½in. (23.3 x 42cm.); folio 11¾ x 18¾in. (28.8 x 47.7cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:

Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:

Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

LITERATURE:

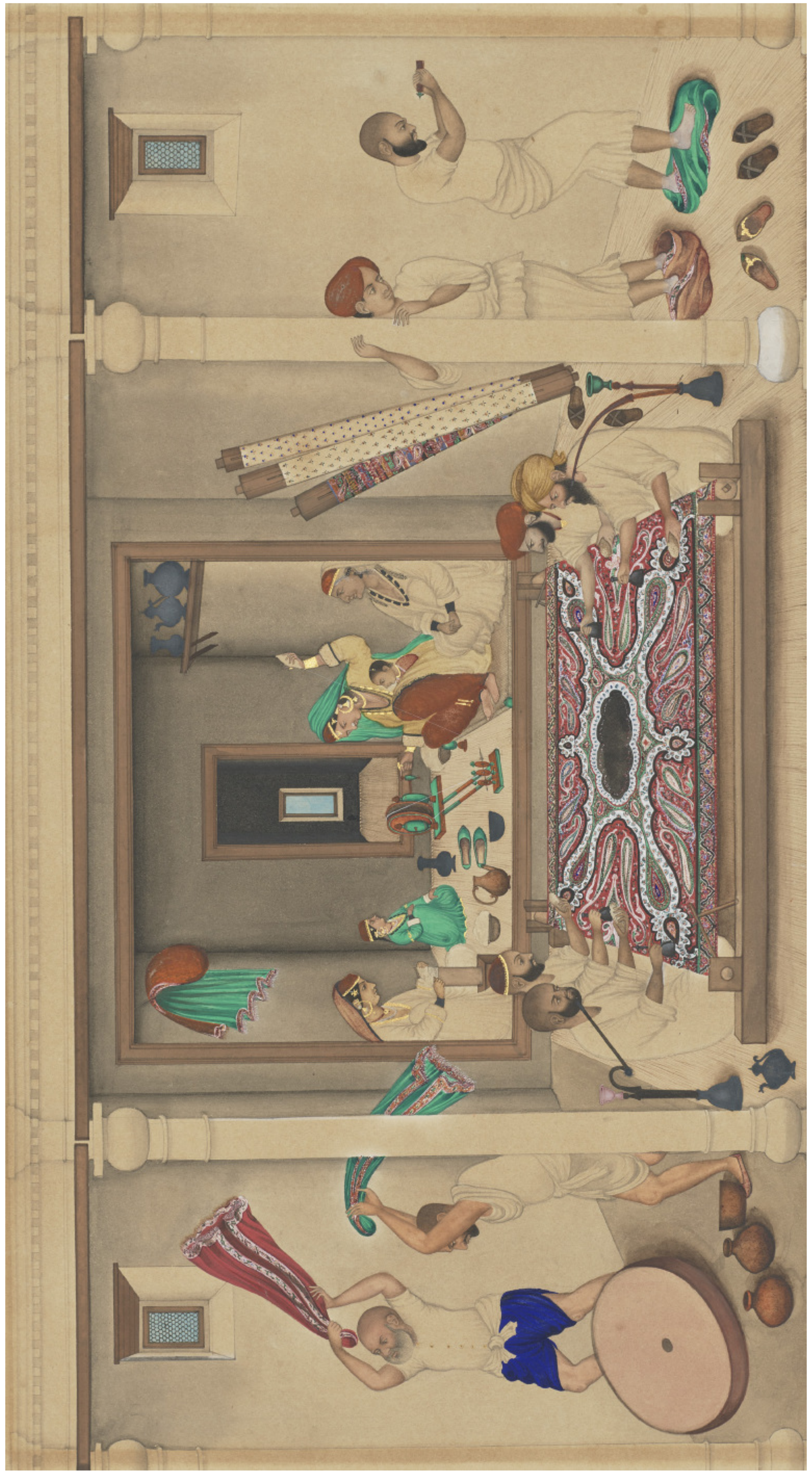
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.4, pp.18-19

In the foreground of this scene, the shawls which were assembled or embroidered in the previous painting in the series are further refined ahead of sale. The eye is immediately drawn to the open shawl in the middle of the scene, which appears to be a *dochalla*, or square shawl, of a style absolutely in keeping with other examples made around the time of the *Exposition Universelle*. These often had at the middle a quatrefoil medallion in black outlined in white, an example of which from the Etro collection, Milan (published Levi-Strauss 1987, pp.176-7). Like another example published John Ames 1997, pl.166, that shawl had seams in it indicating that it had been assembled from fragments by *rafugars*. Rolled up at the back are three more shawls evocative of the products of Kashmiri workshops from the early 19th century: the striped one resembles a shawl sold in these Rooms, 18 June 2019, lot 70.

Moorcroft describes the role of a *purusgar*, or shawl cleaner. He writes that "when a shawl is finished it is the business of this artist to free the shawl from discoloured hairs or yarn and from ends or knots". For this purpose the four men use a broad pair of tweezers: identical tweezers can be seen in a pencil sketch done by John Lockwood Kipling in 1870, only a short while after the *Exposition Universelle,* now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (acc.no.0929:7/(IS)). In that picture, the shawl is suspended on a similar frame as he works. Unlike that figure, all four of our *purusgars* hold in their left hands a small pale object. They seem to be porous, suggesting that they are perpahs sponges or pumice stones which may have also helped pick up loose hairs. Unlike those working in other scenes, two of the *purusgars* smoke as they work.

Around that frame, other figures work on *amli* shawls. Having already been trampled, once again they receive rough treatment. To the left and right, men either beat them on a millstone or trample them, with the figure on the right leaning on a peg driven into the wall for support. The whitened feet of the figures on the right suggest that they might be treading soapy water out of them: one thinks of the two figures standing in bowls in lot 65. Leaning against the back wall are three further shawls around wooden rollers: these may be the same as the ones described by Moorcroft which were used for stretching completed shawls, into which wedges were driven in order to push the sides of the cylinder apart and put the shawl under strain (Murphy 1988, p.18). These various stages of conditioning would ensure the soft texture of the finished product, though it is a testament to the quality of the work that these textiles could stand up to this kind of conditioning. These paintings may have amused or even shocked the visitors to the *Exposition Universelle*, who would have been scarcely able to believe that something so refined should have been subjected to such force.

The manipulation of space allows Bishan Singh to include two stages of shawl production in this single scene, with a second room visible behind the *purusgars* where women are engaged in spinning wool. The broadly chronological order of these paintings is thus broken by the appearance of what should be considered the first and most fundamental stage of the shawl making process. To the left, a woman sits with a bowl of raw wool in front of her, and seems to be busy seperating it with her fingers, perhaps assisted by a comb. Moorcroft describes how raw wool, after being mixed with rice flour, is 'torn to pieces, principally by the nails, and made into somewhat thin elastic pads'. This allowed for inferior wool to be extracted and treated separately, so that only the finest was used to make shawls. Once that had been done and all the wool fibres broadly running in the same direction, she would be able to pass the wool to her colleague at the wheel beside her. Moorcroft describes three types of spinning wheel of which only one, the *Pukchedar*, is painted, as seems to be the case in this painting: this may indicate the user to be a more prosperous woman, in Moorcroft's words "not in indigent circumstance but who amuse themselves with spinning". Moorcroft himself implies that the skill of the spinners, who begin to work from the age of around ten, was the crucial reason why Kashmir shawls were of such exceptional finesse: "it is a fact reported that machinery cannot furnish yarn as well adapted for the manufacture of shawls as that spin by hand in Kashmeer" (Moorcroft 1832, p.8).



*68

TRADERS EVALUATING SHAWLS IN THE HOUSE OF THE BROKER (*MUQIM*)

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, a faded inscription to the margin below, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 13¼ x 23⅛in. (33.5 x 58.6cm.); folio 27⅛ x 17⅛in. (43.6 x 69cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

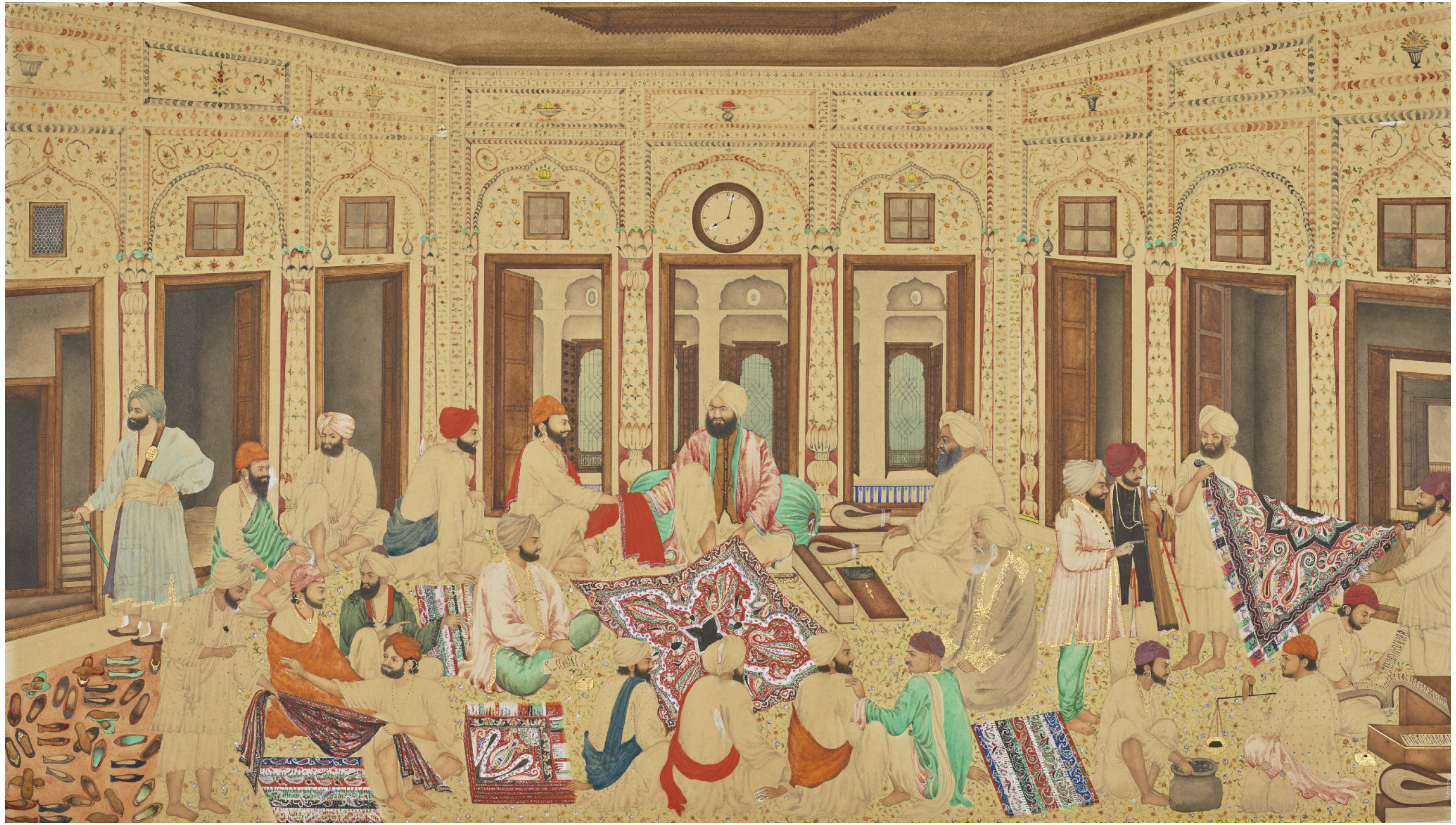
LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.6, pp.22-3
N. Sayedi, "Imperial Threads: Kashmiri Shawls in Nineteenth-Century Iran", *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 59, 2024, p.117, fig.6

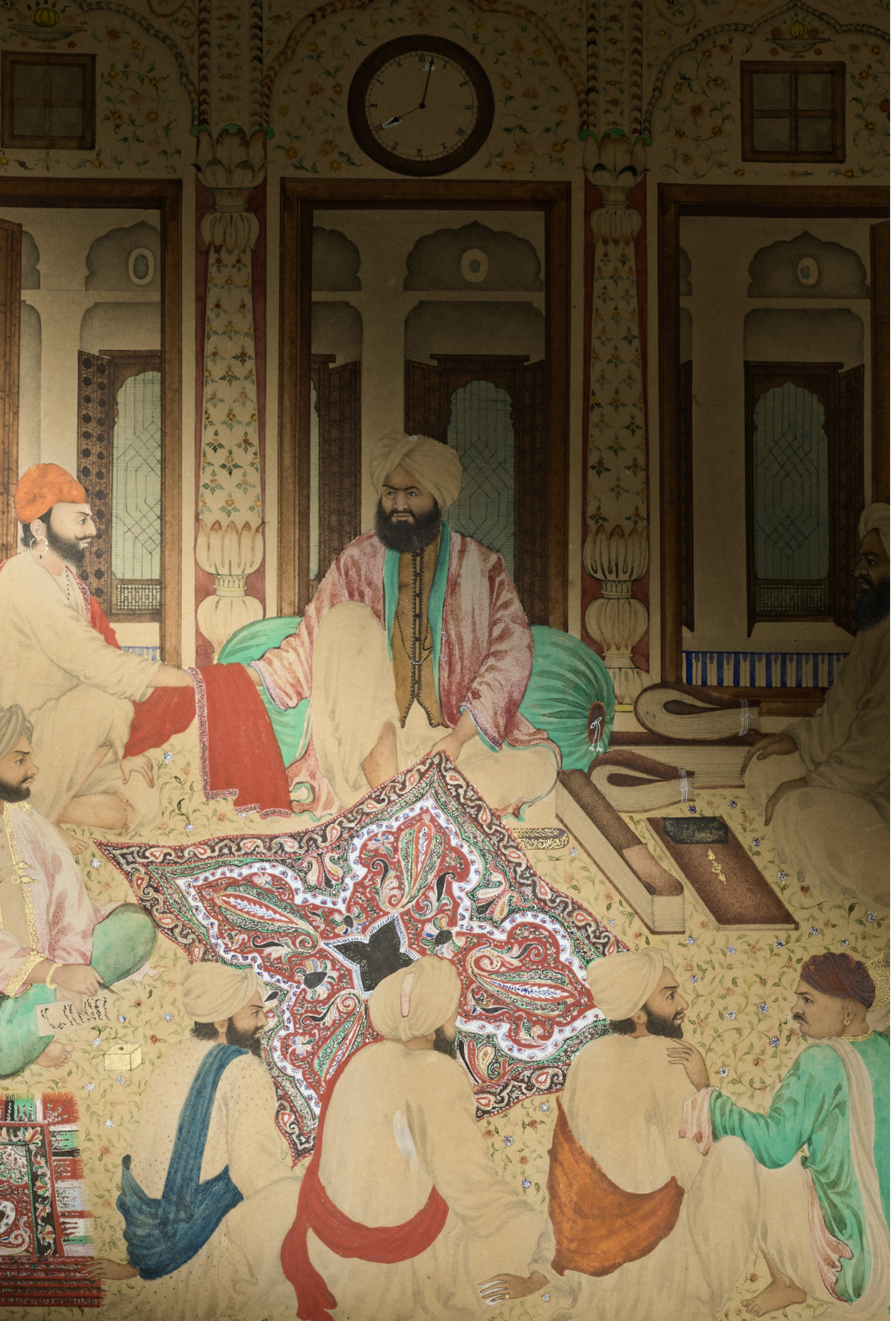
Like every other stage of the shawl making process, the acquisition of the shawls by merchants involved the participation of several specialised individuals. A key role was played by the *muqim,* a broker who was involved at almost every stage of the shawl making process. First he would discuss the design with the head weaver in order to determine "the kind and pattern of shawl goods most likely to find a ready sale" (Moorcroft 1823, p.9). He also played a role in securing the equipment and materials for the shawl. He would return once the shawl was completed to collect it and settle the asking price. Then they would be able to present it to merchants, taking a commission of between 2 and 5% (Moorcroft 1823, p.20). As well as a wide range of specialist artisans, the global reach of the shawl industry evidently nurtured a *comprador* class in Kashmir who traded, not on their artistic skills, but on their capital and their negotiating ability.

The skill of the artist vividly evokes the characters in the scene, and the complex power dynamics at play. The merchants are visibly outsiders. According to Frank Ames, in the mid-19th century the main customers for Kashmir shawls were Persians, who exported the shawls into Iran, and Hindus, who took the shawls South (Ames 1997, p.33). A man writing in the centre of the scene uses a script that connects at the bottom, like Persian, rather than at the top, like the Sharada alphabet used for Kashmiri at the time, and thus identifies himself as a Persian. Meanwhile several of the figures in the room, such as the two red-turbaned figures to the lower right corner, have *tilaka* marks on their foreheads, identifying them as Hindus. They carry with them the material trappings of wealth: many wear jewellery and have gold edgings on their clothes. The central figure has a golden penbox below his knee. The merchant in a dark robe to the right of the scene also holds an elaborate cane, with a carved bird's head for a handle. Interestingly, many wear plain-coloured shawls around the waist or draped over the shoulder, indicating that they were buyers of these textiles as well as sellers. The finely-dressed central figure bears some similarity with the shawl merchant depicted by Bishan Singh in a signed portrait which sold Sotheby's London, 30 April 2025, lot 623.

This scene takes place in the most extravagant interior of the entire series. Highly elaborate *pietra dura* work decorates the walls, and an enormous patterned carpet covers the floor. The open windows and receding rooms glanced through doors on both sides give this room a sense of light and space which is absent from the cramped workshops which appear earlier in the group. Based on Thomas Vigne's account, this may actually be the home of a *muqim.* According to Vigne, the *muqim* would invite merchants to stay with them in the valley, extending every hospitality to those who found "well-timed civility irresistible". Shawl manufacturers would come to show their wares to these merchants, and to ensure that all transactions took place under the watchful eye of the *muqim*, who always had one eye on his commission (Vigne 1842, p.133). The well-decorated interior may have served to impress these visitors from out of town. The most obvious status symbol in this painting is the European clock which appears above the main figure, with Roman numerals around the dial. In a rare oversight, the artist has not quite understood the sequence of the numbers correctly.

The execution of this painting, with an extensive use of uncoloured space, evokes the magnificent *durbar* scenes painted by Bishan Singh. This includes a depiction of the court of Ranjit Singh sold Sotheby's London, 31 March 2021, lot 44, which also has a similar carpet and was dated to VS 1927/1870-1 AD. Pencil lines visible through the skirts of the two figure to the right of the scene give a clue as to how Bishan Singh constructed these complex gatherings: beginning with ruled lines to draw out the space, he then populated the scene with figures. Those two figures, who proudly display a completed shawl to two merchants, are strikingly similar to a pair who appear in the Bishan Singh painting in the Musée Guimet, where they are similarly placed in the right hand side of the painting.





***69**

THE SHAWL-WASHERS (*DHOBI*) IN A STREAM

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold and silver on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9 x 16in. (23 x 40.7cm.); folio 20⅛ x 13in.(51.1 x 32.9cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

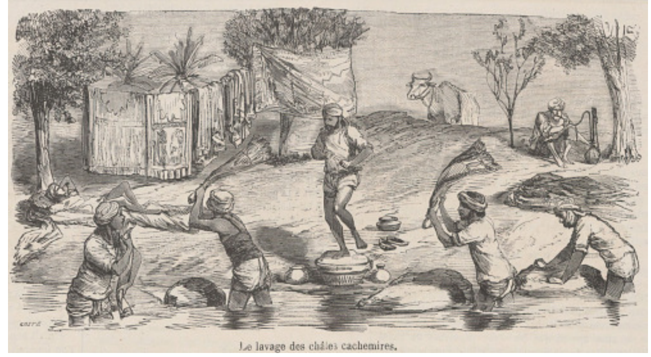
LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.7, pp.24-5
E. Barratt, "Drawing Shawls", HALI, issue 40, pp.90-1

When the merchants bought the shawls, they remained in an unfinished state: often they had not yet been assembled by the *rafugars*, and rarely had they been cleaned. Consequently, many retained the stiffness from the rice solution with which the warps were treated. The process by which they were washed was carefully described by Thomas Vigne in 1842, and accords closely with what is depicted in this painting. According to him, the shawls were first immersed in water on the banks of a stream, and then "stamped on by naked feet for about five minutes". After that, the shawls are "taken to the canal by a man standing in the water: one end is gathered up in his hand, and the shawl swung round and beaten with great force upon a flat stone, being dipped into the canal between every three or four strokes" (Vigne 1842, pp.129-30).

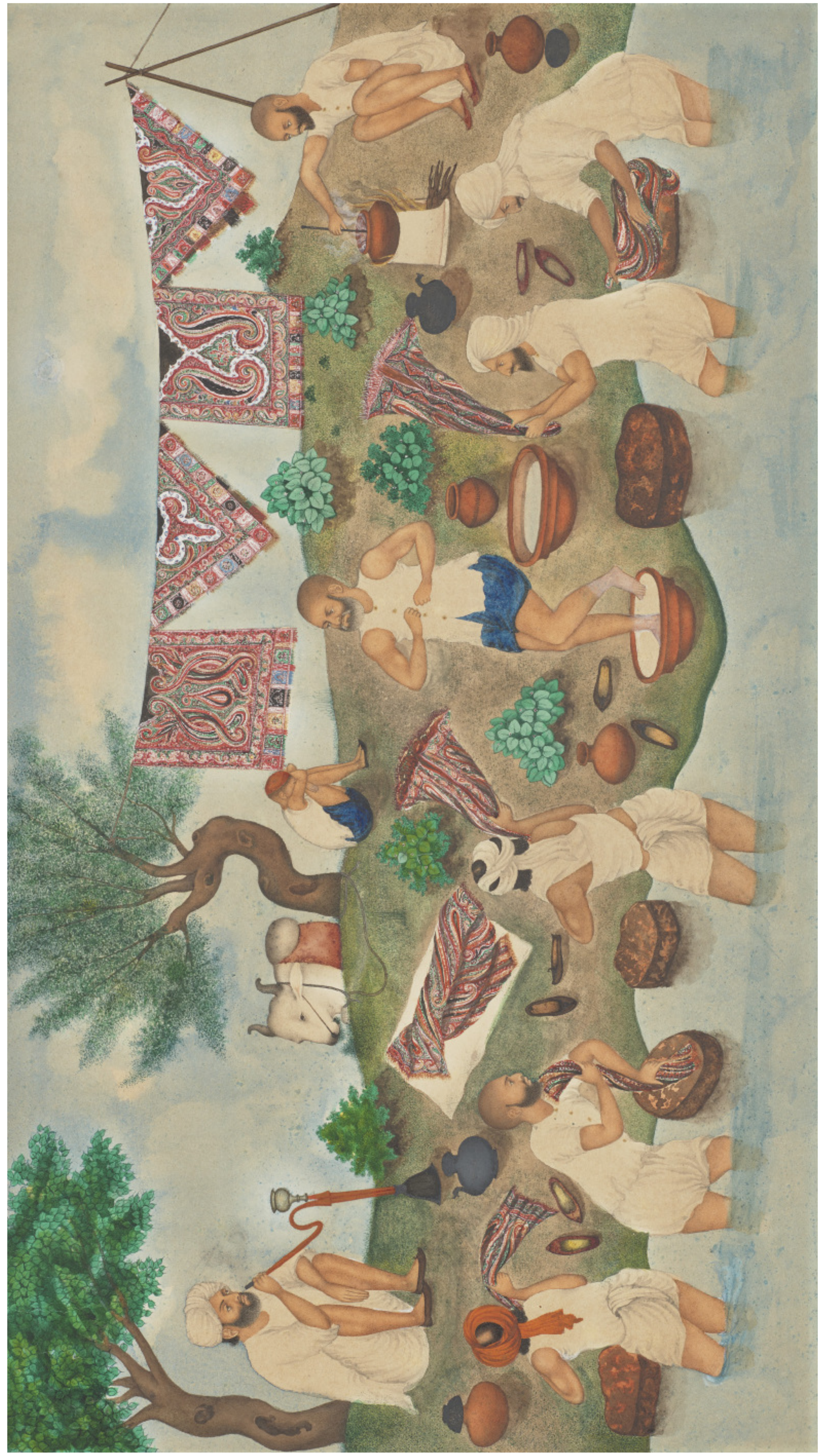
Many of the authors writing about Kashmir shawl manufacture agree on the importance of washing in the process, and go so far as to suggest that the water quality in the Kashmir valley explains why the shawls made there are so soft. This belief dates back as far as the 17th century, when Francois Bernier wrote that shawls made in Agra and Patna were significantly worse than those from the valley because of the poor water quality in the plains (Irwin 1974, p.9). Moorcroft understood that the best water was referred to as 'Gagreebal', perhaps a reference to the southern basin of the Dal Lake in Srinagar, and that "it is thought by the manufacturers that no other water is equally well suited for this purpose" (Moorcroft 1823, p.20). For Vigne, however, the best water for washing was that from "the canal between the lake and floodgates at Drogjun", which are located in the south of Kashmir. A certain amount of local pride seems to have been at play here, with European travellers faithfully recording whatever they were told by their interlocutors. Though it is not possible to be specific about where this scene takes place, the darker water around the legs of the figures indicates that this is a fast-flowing stream rather than a lake.

This is one of the three scenes illustrated with engravings in the article by Leo de Bernard in *Le Monde Illustré,* 26 January 1867, pp.55-6 (see image below). The accompanying text described this scene as taking place "in the river which flows out of Lake Kashmir", which unfortunately does not help narrow down the intended location of the painting. However, de Bernard also added that the water was believed to have "great merit in the preservation of colours", which was locally believed to be the result of the "aromatic plants which grow beside the lake, which are not found in any other country". The poses of the figures in the engraving closely match those in our painting, as do incidental details like the oddly-shaped cow in the background and the shawls hanging on a line to dry. Together with the textual reference which mentions that the engravings are based on paintings by a Kashmiri artist provided by Frainais-Gramagnac, it is highly likely that this is the very painting upon which the engraving - signed by Edouard Coste - was based. The illustrations to the 1867 article includes two further engravings apparently based on paintings from this series: they depict both the *shalbaf* and *rafugar*s at work, and also share many striking incidental details with the picture in our series.

Two painted copies of this particular scene have been sold in these Rooms, one from the Niall Hobhouse collection sold in these Rooms, 22 May 2008, lot 316; the latter, formerly with Ismail Merchant, sold 7 October 2009, lot 179, and is now in the Toor collection. Similarities include figures in matching poses, as well as the same curiously foreshortened cow over the horizon, suggesting that they may have been directly copied. For the attention paid to the landscape and the detailed treatment of the shawls, this stands as the finest known copy, and possibly the exemplar for the other two. A detail which Bishan Singh is particularly keen to capture is the musculature of the men, eloquently capturing the intensely physical nature of this work. The figure in the centre of this scene closely resembles the man beating a shawl at the left hand side of lot 67: if they are intended to be the same figure, it may suggest that Bishan Singh was not painting 'types' but portraits of shawl workers whom he had studied. Certainly, when one considers paintings such as his Amritsar Municipal Committee and his *darbars* of Ranjit Singh, there is no doubt that Bishan Singh was more than capable of producing finely-realised and recognisable portraits of real people.


Le lavage des châles cachemires.

Le lavage des chales cachemires', in "Kashmyr et ses chales", *Le Monde Illustré*, 26 January 1867, p.57



***70**

PRESENTING SHAWLS TO THE CUSTOMS OFFICIAL (*DAROGHA*) BEFORE PACKING

ATTRIBUTABLE TO BISHAN SINGH, PROBABLY AMRITSAR, NORTH INDIA, 1866-67

Translucent pigments heightened with gold on card, set within a pair of doubled blue rules, the white margins plain, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 9⅜ x 16⅛in. (23.8 x 41cm.); folio 11¾ x 18¼in. (29.8 x 46.5cm.)

£60,000-80,000
US$82,000-110,000
€70,000-92,000

PROVENANCE:
Maison Frainais-Gramagnac, Paris, 1867
Anon. sale, Mes Rabourdin & Choppin de Janvry, Paris, 16 December 1987, lot 36
Kyburg Limited, London, 1988

EXHIBITED:
Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

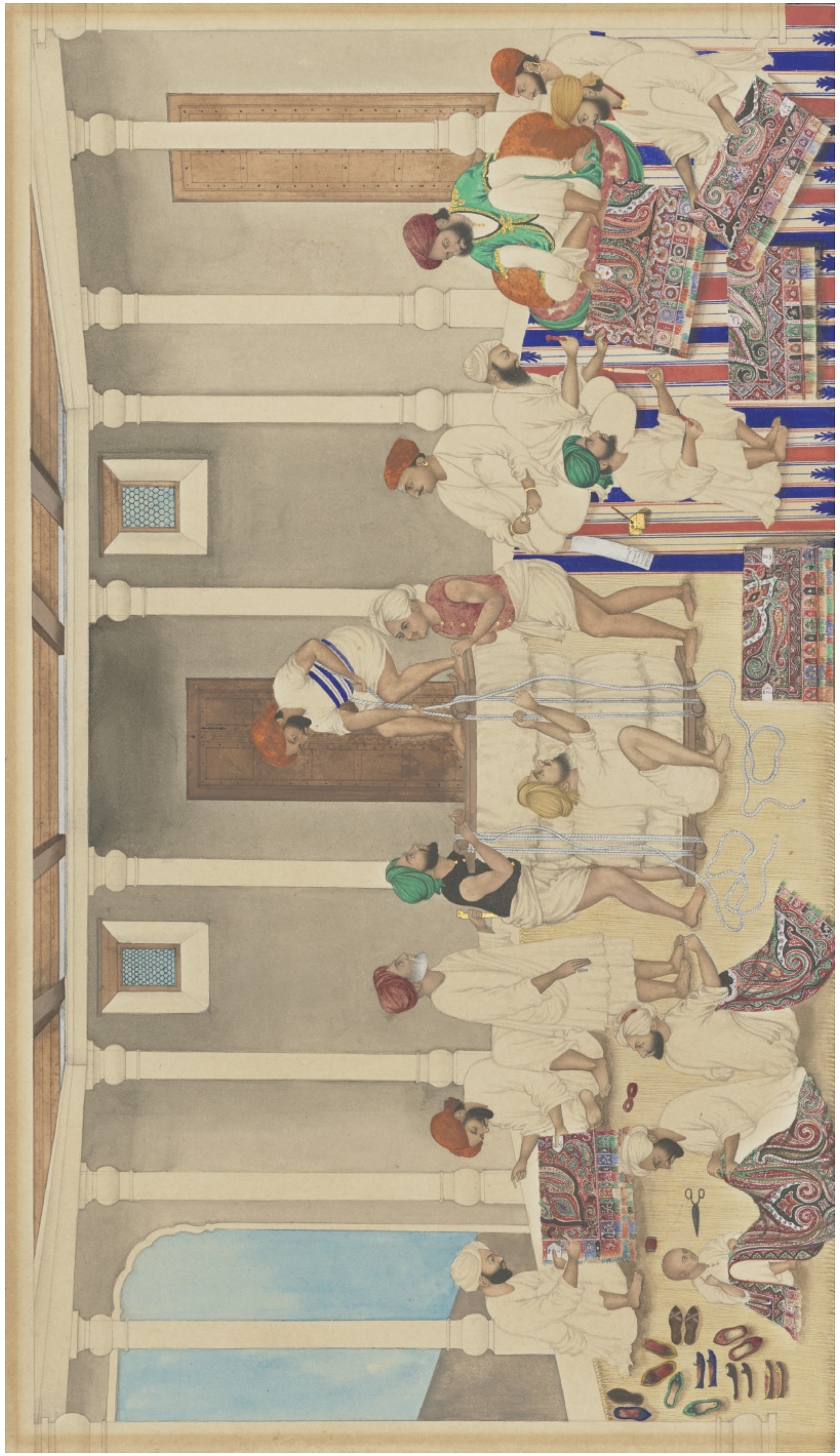
LITERATURE:
V. Murphy, *Kashmir Shawls. Woven Art & Cultural Document,* Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988, no.8, pp.26-7

By the late 19th century, excise taxes on shawls had become one of the most important sources of revenue for the Dogra rulers of Kashmir. As noted above, taxes had been charged on shawls since the introduction of 'dagshawl' by the Afghans in the late 18th century, but by the 19th century taxes were becoming ever steeper. In 1823, Moorcroft recorded that the standard excise tax stood at 26% of the value of a shawl (Moorcroft 1823, p.29). In December 1853, the American Traveller John Ireland recorded a slightly higher level of taxation when he wrote that "the Maharaja and his agents keep watch on every shawl made to get the 33% tax; and as soon as finished, the shawl is shown to them and the Maharaja's name marked in thread in one corner of all Cashmere shawls" (quoted in Ames 1997, p.48). In 1873, Charles Edwin Bates recorded that every shawl was subject to a 25% excise tax, but that the exactions of corrupt officials might result in double that being paid (Irwin 1973, p.9). Inconsistent values likely reflect not only the unstable fiscal regime of the Dogras, but also the scope for grift and abuse built into the system.

According to Moorcroft, it is only after the shawls have been cleaned that they are priced: the figure, which is agreed upon between the *muqim,* the representative of the customs office (*darogha*), and the owner of the shawl, is marked onto a label with the name of the shawl's owner by a functionary called the *chikkundoz* (Moorcroft 1823, p.20). These are probably the same two figures who appear on the left hand side of the painting, busily attaching paper labels to a stack of folded shawls. The numbers on the shawl labels in this scene are legible. They range from 5,000 for the stack in the middle of the painting to 8,000 for those to the right of them. Interestingly, the *chinnukdoz* on the left are both sewing prices onto the same stack of shawls, and they seem not to quite align: one reads 7,700, the other 8,000. This may reflect the different prices which a *muqim* and *darogha* might settle on when trying to determine tax. Beside the *chinnukdoz, rafugars* are at work correcting any last defects or splits in the shawls, perhaps caused by the vigorous treatment they had received at the hands of the *dhobis*.

Once the labels are attached, shawls are presented to the customs official (*darogha)* or one of his representatives. This is unmistakeably the figure clad in a gold-edged green jacket to the right of the painting, who sits comfortably on large pillows. According to Thomas Vigne, before being exported every shawl had to be officially stamped to certify that all excises had been paid (Vigne 1842, p.129). The exquisite detail of this scene captures this moment - a green-turbaned man holds out a candle while his colleague uses it to melt the end of a red wax bar. The *darogha* laconically presses a ring, here picked out in gold, into the wax to approve the shawls for export. Moorcroft attests that a *darogha* might receive as much as six rupees for every shawl cleared (Moorcroft 1823, p.21).

The packing of shawls completes the finishing process, and according to Moorcroft was overseen by the *dhobis.* He describes how shawls were stacked exactly as portrayed here: on wooden planks, with sheets of coloured paper interleaved with the shawls themselves. When the desired number of shawls have been layered on top of one another, he writes that a 'coarse strong cloth' is put on top to cover the sides of the shawls and its ends sewn together. Finally another wooden plank placed on the top. He describes how the bale is then secured with "four projecting cross bars" which are "bound together very tightly by cords", just as seen in this painting. Given the tightness of the bale, Moorcroft notes that "the Dhobees never iron or calendar their shawls, trusting to strong pressure and to the intervening paper producing upon the surface as much smoothness as is desirable" (Moorcroft 1823, p.21).
In this painting, the packing takes place under the watchful eyes of a Hindu merchant, distinguishable by his *tilaka,* and a figure with a gold lion-headed cane. Perhaps another merchant or, judging from his signet ring, another customs official.



***71**

MAHARAJA SHER SINGH (1807-43) FROM EMILY EDEN'S *PORTRAITS OF THE PRINCES AND PEOPLE OF INDIA*

PUBLISHED BY J. DICKINSON AND SON, LONDON, GREAT BRITAIN, 1844

Hand finished chromolithograph on paper, laid down on buff paper, mounted, framed and glazed
Image 14⅜ x 9⅝in. (36.4 x 24.3cm.); folio 22 x 17½in. (55.9 x 44.4cm.)

£2,000-3,000
US$2,800-4,100
€2,400-3,500

PROVENANCE:
Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd, London, 1973

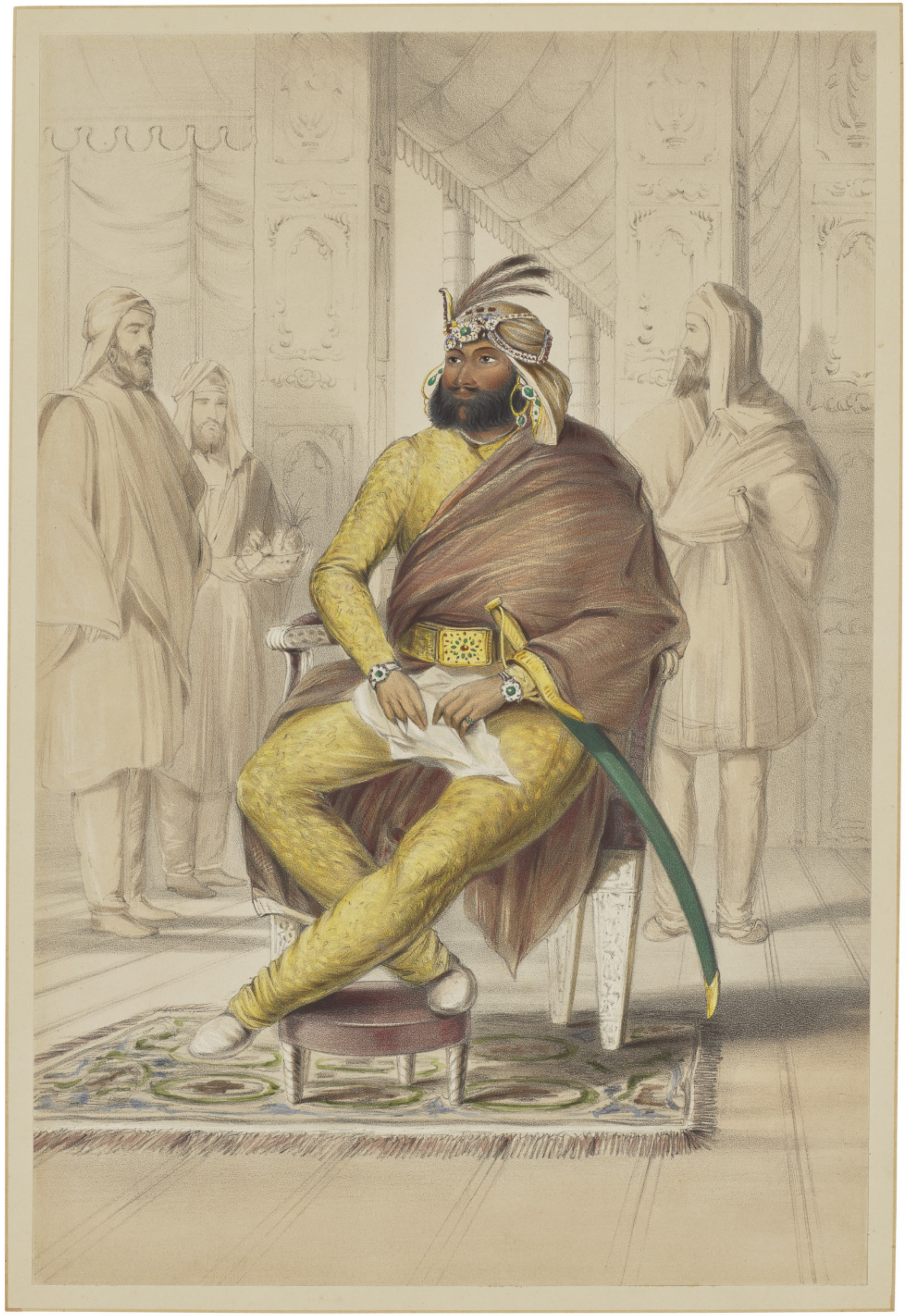
LITERATURE:
Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd, *Emily Eden in India, 1836-1842,* Catalogue 29, London, 1973, no. 17

INSCRIPTIONS:
The printed legend reads, '2 . MAHARAJA SHERE SINGH, the present Sovereign of the Sikhs, son of the late Maharaja Runjeet Singh. The present Maharaja succeeded to power early in 1841. He served with honour in Runjeet Singh's Campaigns, and has always shown a peculiar friendship and regard for the European Officers in the Sikh Services'

This hand-coloured lithograph comes from The Honourable Emily Eden's *Portraits of the Princes of India,* a privately-published volume which contained 24 hand coloured lithographs of figures she encountered on her travels through Northern India between 1837 and 1840. She travelled accompanied by her sister Fanny, as well as her brother Lord Auckland, the newly-appointed Governor-General of India. As well as including 'types' - depictions of 'fakirs', for instance, or Tibetan merchants she encountered in Shimla - the volume included portraits of many of the individuals she met in the course of her travels, especially in the Sikh Kingdom during the last years of Ranjit Singh. Her sketches were converted by J. Dickson and Son into lithographs for this limited print run.

As well as her *Portraits,* her letters to her sister written during her travels were published in 1867 as *'Up the Country': letters written to her sister from the upper provinces of India.* In these letters, she describes how she developed a particularly close relationship with Sher Singh, who was dispatched by Ranjit Singh to guide them through Punjab (p.210). In the course of many shared dinners she got to know him well, describing him as 'our dear friend' (p.221). Eventually, while visiting the Shalimar gardens on 20 December 1838, she persuaded him to sit for a portrait, and described the experience in the following terms: "Shere Singh came to my tent to sit for his picture — such a gorgeous figure! All over diamonds and emeralds; and as it was a first private visit he brought a bag of rupees, which he waved round and threw on the ground, and of which it is indelicate to take least notice. It is still more indelicate taking them at all, I think, but it cannot be helped. He made a very good picture".

Other copies of *Portraits of the Princes and People of India* include one in the Royal Library, Windsor (acc.no.RCIN 1070252) and others that have appeared at auction, for instance one sold Bonhams London, 21 May 2024, lot 189 and others in these Rooms, 22 April 2010, lot 138; and 29 September 2011, lot 234.



***72**

A YOUNG NOBLEMAN SMOKING A *HUQQA*, POSSIBLY RAJA DHIAN SINGH (D.1843)

PUNJAB HILLS, SIKH EMPIRE, CIRCA 1820-30

Ink and opaque pigments on paper, laid down on dark grey card, framed and glazed
6⅜ x 4¾in. (16.1 x 12cm.)

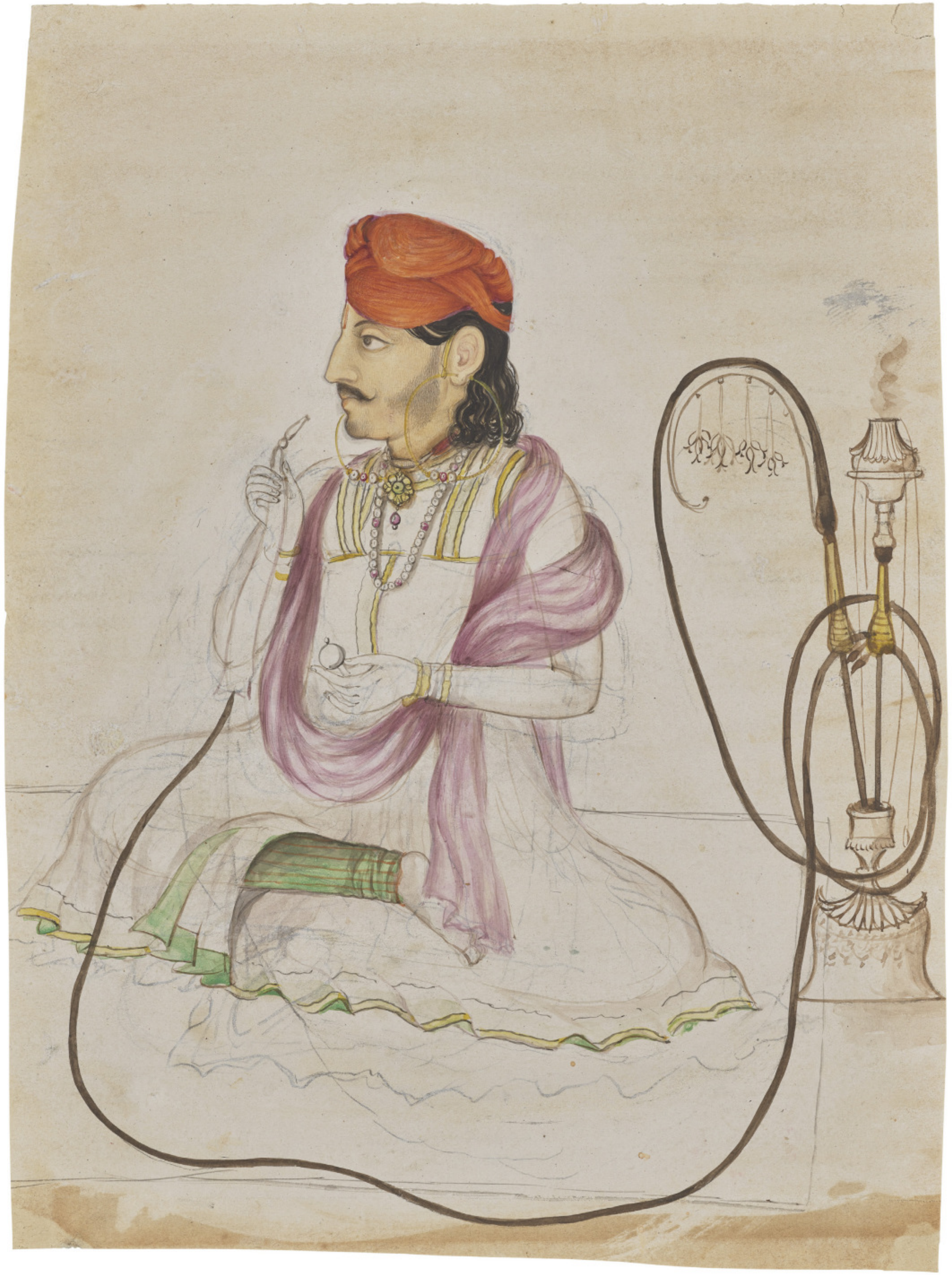
£10,000-15,000
US$14,000-20,000
€12,000-17,000

PROVENANCE:
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1981

This present portrait probably depicts Raja Dhian Singh Dogra (1796-1843), a close confidante of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and one of the most influential figures of the Sikh Empire during its peak. Dhian Singh was the second son of Miari Kishora Singh Dogra of Jammu and was entered into service of Ranjit Singh as a soldier in 1812 by his elder brother Gulab Singh. He quickly found favour and was appointed chamberlain of the royal household in 1818 when he was just twenty-two years old, later becoming principal minister to the Maharaja. Following the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, Dhian Singh became embroiled in the court intrigues that mired the accession of a successor. He supported the claim of Sher Singh to the throne for which Dhian Singh was assassinated, like Sher Singh, in 1843.

When this portrait was originally catalogued in 1981 it was identified as Ranbir Singh (1830-1885). Although there is certainly a strong similarity to other known portraits of Ranbir Singh, our portrait is stylistically more consistent with a dating of circa 1820, which predates Ranbir Singh by a decade. An 1820s dating would place Raja Dhian Singh in his mid-twenties which seems an appropriate age for our subject and at which point Dhian Singh was of sufficient influence and standing to merit an accomplished portrait.

Although we have no other portraits of Dhian Singh without a beard with which to compare, his overall face shape and the profile of the nose and mouth here is consistent with other portraits of Dhian Singh. A portrait in the British Museum attributed to Kangra, circa 1840 (1922,1214,0.1) shows a bearded but comparable portrait of Dhian Singh allowing for a roughly twenty year age gap. A similar argument can be made for another portrait of Dhian Singh sat next to Ranjit Singh and dated circa 1830-40 which was sold as part of the Karl and Elizabeth Katz Collection, Christie's New York, 12 December 2017, lot 55. In that painting he is wearing a shorter style turban exposing his ears and hair which helps compare to the our portrait along with a further painting of Dhian Singh also wearing a shorter style turban and dated to circa 1830 which was sold in Sotheby's, London, 30 October 2022, lot 66.



*73

A YOUNG MAN READING A BOOK

PROBABLY MADE FOR PRINCE IBRAHIM MIRZA (D.1577), ATTRIBUTED TO MIRZA ALI, SAFAVID SABZAVAR, IRAN, CIRCA 1570-4

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, within gold and blue rules, pasted down onto blue paper, reverse plain, mounted
Painting 5½ x 3⅛in. (14.1 x 7.9cm.); folio 5⅝ x 3¼in. (14.3 x 8.1cm.)

£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

PROVENANCE:

Acquired before 1982

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum - Arts of the Book & Calligraphy, Sakip Sabanci Museum, Istanbul, 2010-11

LITERATURE:

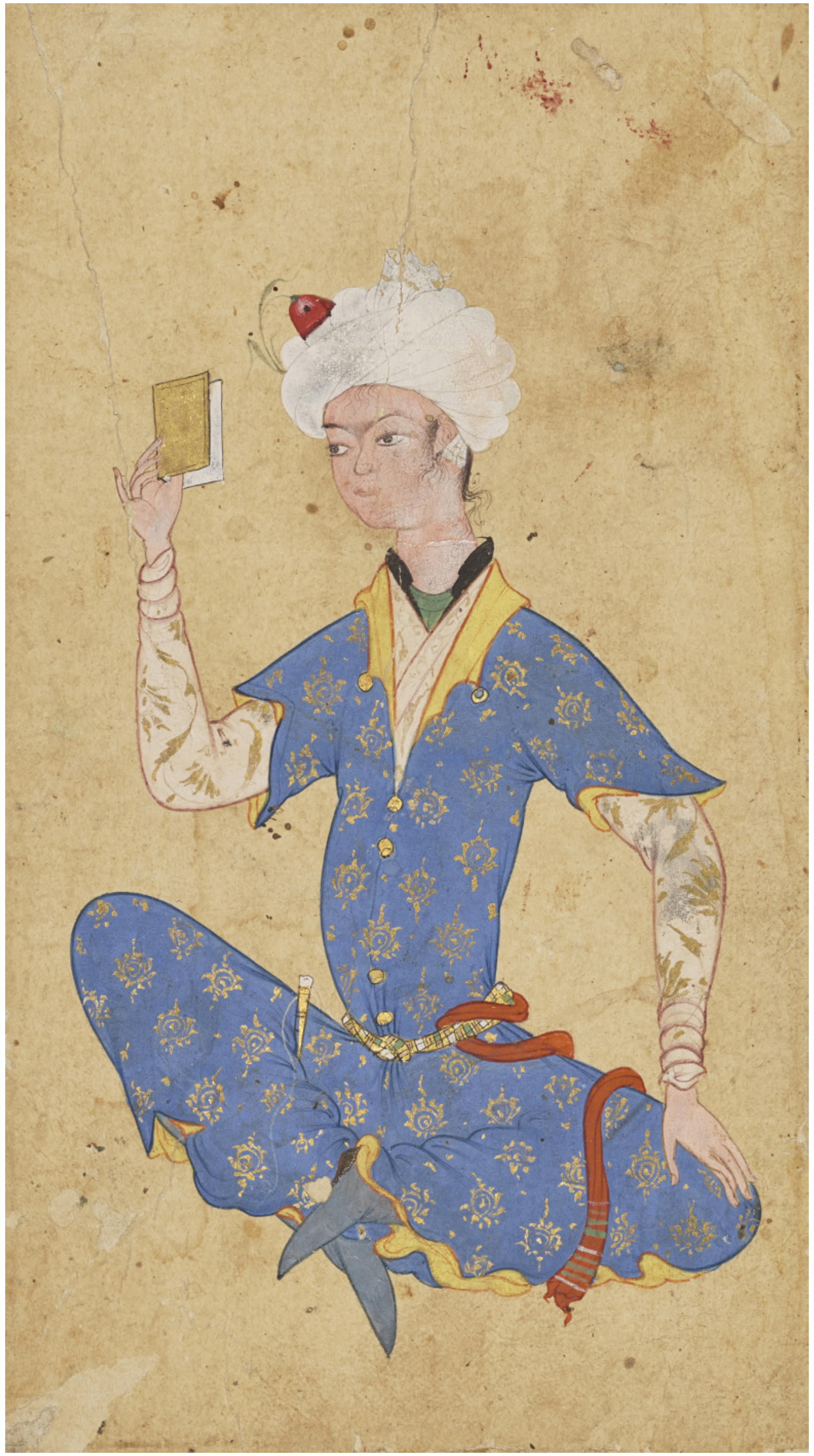
M. B. Dickson and S. C. Welch, *The Houghton Shahnameh,* volume I, Cambridge MA, 1981, p.150, fig.208
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.27A, pp.84-5
A. Soudavar, "Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition", *Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, vol. XXXVII, 1999, p.57, pl.XVIId
Graves, Margaret S. et al. *Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum - Arts of the Book & Calligraphy.* Istanbul, 2011. no.60, p.138 and cover illus.

> "The courtly young man sits trim, limber, and erect, yet seems as sweetly vulnerable as the poppy drooping under its own weight in his turban"
>
> **STUART CARY WELCH**

This elegant painting was executed at an unsettled time in the life of the painter Mirza Ali, and at a moment of change in the wider history of Safavid painting. Having worked at the court of Shah Tahmasp and contributed to his great *Shahnama*, by the 1570s he was working instead for Prince Ibrahim Mirza, after Shah Tahmasp lost interest in artistic pursuits. Like his artist, in the 1570s Ibrahim Mirza had fallen from royal favour, and had been sent into effective exile as governor of Sabzavar. When Ibrahim Mirza arrived in Khorasan, his vizier Khwaja Shaykh Uvayz was instructed to supply him with grain from the local harvest, and to give him an allowance of one *tuman* a day (Farhad and Simpson 1993, p.288).

Living on this pittance, the patronage of lavish manuscripts like the *Haft Awrang* in the National Museum of Asian Art, Washington D.C. (acc.no.46.12), which was copied for Ibrahim Mirza between 1556 and 1565 was no longer possible. However, a copy of Ghazali Mashhadi's *Naqsh-i Badi'* which was prepared for him in Muharram AH 982/April-May 1574 AD has a colophon stating that it was written in Sabzavar by Ibrahim Mirza's *kitabkhaneh* (Farhad and Simpson 1993, p.288). This suggests that a group of artists and calligraphers followed him into exile, Mirza Ali likely among them. It is for this reason that Stuart Cary Welch attributes this particular painting to this period of exile in the life of both artist and patron, writing that its quality 'must have brought moments of pleasure, even at Sabzavar' (Welch and Welch, 1982, p.84).

Mirza Ali's work from this period is limited to single-page compositions or *muraqqa'* albums, like another painting of a young man in the National Museum of Asian Art (acc.no.1958.61). As in our painting, a slender *youth in a blue gown* wears a rounded turban decorated with a drooping flower. Another comparable painting to this example is a depiction of a lady who also delicately holds a small gold-bound book in her fingertips in the collection of the Museum of Fine Art, Boston (acc.no.14.593). A final example worth mentioning sold in these Rooms, 13 July 1956, lot 180, and was attributed to Mirza Ali by Anthony Welch (Welch 1973, no.5, p.64). It depicts a similarly refined figure in an identical cross-legged pose, and is now in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha.



***74**

A YOUTH SITTING ON A ROCK PLAYING AN *EKTAR*

PROBABLY MADE FOR PRINCE IBRAHIM MIRZA (D.1577), ATTRIBUTABLE TO MIRZA ALI, SAFAVID QAZVIN, IRAN, CIRCA 1580

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within gold and polychrome rules, laid down on buff paper borders stencilled with gold birds and scrolling flowers, pasted onto card, reverse plain, mounted
Painting 8⅝ x 4½in. (21.8 x 11.4cm.); folio 13.1/.2 x 9¼in. (34.3 x 23.5cm.)

£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

PROVENANCE:
Hagop Kevorkian, New York, before 1962
Sotheby's London, *Highly Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures, Property of the Kevorkian Foundation*, 7 December 1970, lot 49

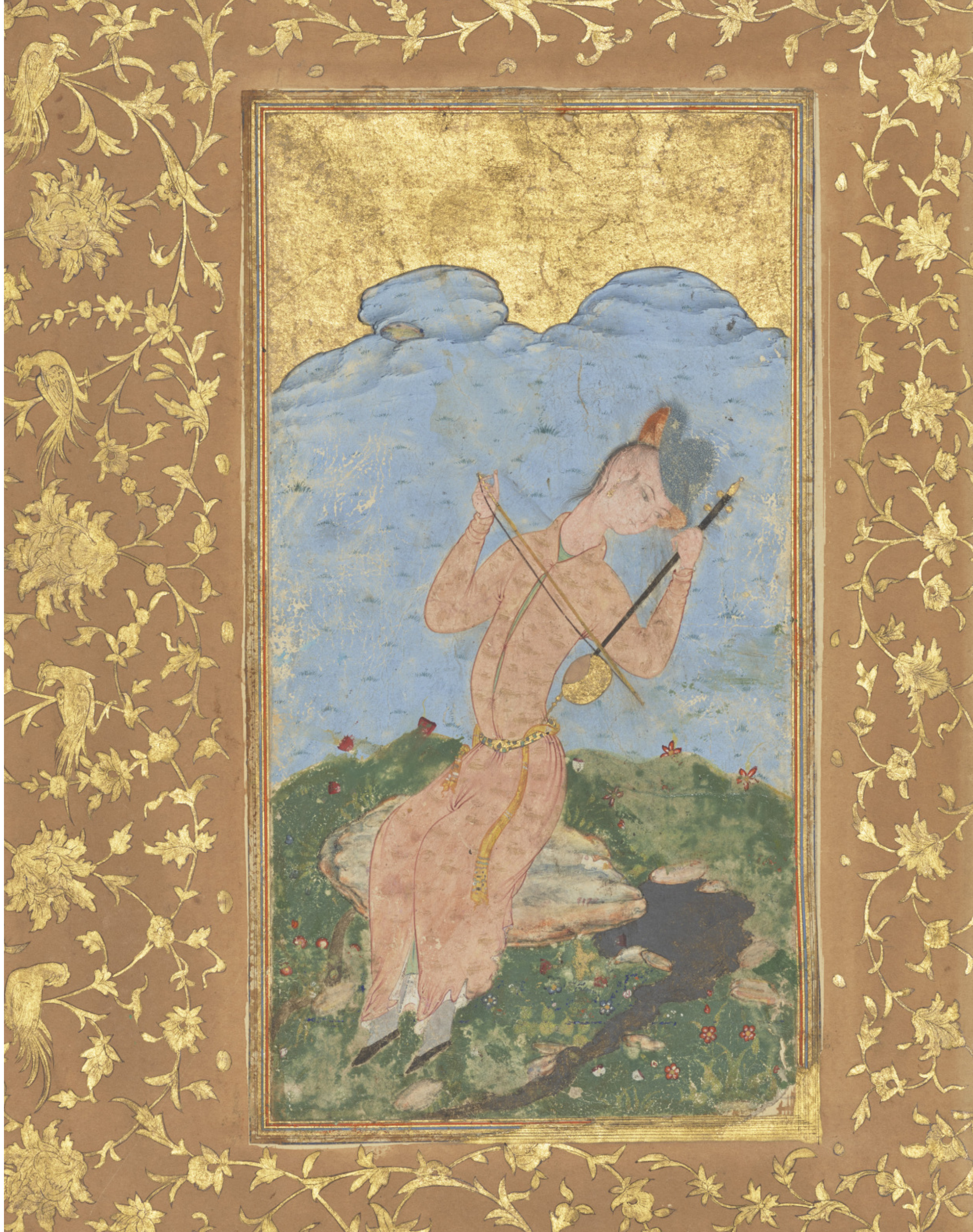
EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Treasures of Islam, Musée Rath, Geneva, 1985
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.100-01
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.27B, pp.84-8
T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam*, Geneva and London, no.71, p.106
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.39, pp.64-5
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.39, pp.64-5
A. Welch, "Worldly and Otherwordly Love in Safavi painting", in R. Hillenbrand (ed.), *Persian Paintings from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil. W. Robinson,* London, 2000, pp.304, 316, fig.19

The elongated and strained pose of the musician in this painting echoes the tension of the strings of the *ektar* which he plays in the middle of a wilderness. When Stuart Cary Welch published this painting, he attributed this figure, like that of the previous lot, to Mirza Ali's time spent in Sabzavar with his exiled patron Ibrahim Mirza. Certainly, there are similarities in the pose of the figure in our painting to that of the woman reading in the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, mentioned in the note to the previous lot (acc.no.14.593). Sheila Canby also highlights that the fur collar of the lady receives a similar treatment to the upturned fur hat worn by our musician.

Other comparable figures include two paintings in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha. In the first, a kneeling young man apparently presents a sheet of paper to someone standing out of the frame (acc. no.MS.42.2007). His back is tense and his belly protrudes as he leans backwards and looks up. The second painting is a seated woman reading from a manuscript (acc.no.MS.598.2007). Though she is a more rotund figure, as she looks down to the page her head tilts forward and neck extends in a way typical of Mirza Ali's subjects, including our musician.

There exists a double-page composition depicting a hunting party, which was attributed to Mirza Ali by Stuart Cary Welch, and which is today split between the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no.12.223.1) and the Museum of Fine Art, Boston (14.624). Though these are busier scenes, the golden sky, the lush oasis ground, and the blocks of blue-grey rocky scree echo that of the present lot. Moreover, at the bottom of the Boston folio is a figure engaged in cooking a goose, who has the same part-shaved head and fur hat as our figure. Though Stuart Cary Welch suggests that both this composition and our painting were executed in Sabzavar after 1570, Canby argues that similarities to other paintings – such as the garden party from the *Divan* of Ibrahim Mirza which is dated to 1582 and is now in the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto (acc.no.AKM282.86) - indicate that both paintings were executed by Mirza Ali in Qazvin, after Ibrahim Mirza's return from exile (Canby 1998, p.64).



*75

A YOUTH IN A GOLDEN HAT

ATTRIBUTED TO SHAYKH MUHAMMAD, SAFAVID QAZVIN, IRAN, CIRCA 1587

Ink and wash heightened with gold on paper, seal in upper left corner, illuminated panels of *nasta'liq* set horizontally and vertically comprising of verses by Mir Ali Shir Nava'i and Sa'di, gold and polychrome rules, laid down within borders stencilled in gold and pink, pasted onto card, reverse pasted down with a page of unrelated text not fully visible, mounted
Drawing 5⅜ x 3½in. (13.7 x 8.8cm.); folio 14⅛ x 9in. (35.9 x 22.9cm.)

£25,000-35,000
US$34,000-48,000
€29,000-40,000

PROVENANCE:

Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008), Cambridge, MA, before 1972
Sotheby's London, *Fine Indian and Persian Miniatures and a Manuscript, Selected from the well-known collection of Cary Welch*, 12 December 1972, lot 200

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Princes, Poets and Paladins, London, British Museum; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.104-05
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Ithaca, 1982, no.28, pp.88-90
M.L. Swietochowski and S. Babaie, *Persian Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum,* New York, 1989, fig.22, p.56
S. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer, The Drawings and Paintings of Reza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996, pp. 220, 230, fig. 22
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.40, pp.65-6
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients,* Zurich, 1998, no.11, pp.46-7
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.40, pp.65-6
A. Adamova, "On the Attribution of Persian Paintings and Drawings of the Time of Shah Abbas I: Seals and Attributory Inscriptions", in R. Hillenbrand (ed.), *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson*, London, 2000, pp.20, 36, pl.18
E. Baer, *The Human Figure in Islamic Art: Inheritances and Islamic Transformation,* Costa Mesa, 2004, col.pl.VIII

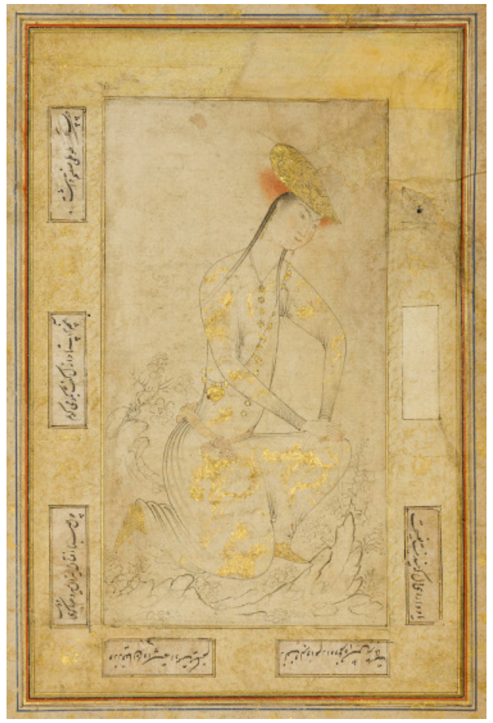
This drawing is one of a small number of drawings and paintings all with a similar composition of a kneeling youth with long strands of hair falling to their shoulders and all wearing an elongated golden hat. It has been suggested that all of them are based on a shared prototype. The earliest known example is in the Amir Huseyin Beg album in the Topkapi Library, Istanbul (acc.no.TSK H.2151). Since that album was assembled in Turkey in AH 968/1560-1 AD, it suggests that the drawing itself was executed in the first half of the 16th century. A second version of the figure is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no.1973.92, illustrated right). It seems to have been produced around the same time as our drawing, though it has been noted that the museum's example is not so well drawn (Swietochowski and Babaie 1989, p.56). These three together are all in monochrome, aside from the gold pigment in the hat, and depict a figure with very similar features.

If those three of the 'first generation' are fairly homogenous, those which follow are more diverse. They include examples signed by some of the most celebrated names in 17th century Safavid painting. Two are associated with Reza Abbasi: they include one in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg executed around 1603 (acc.no.VP-705) and another in full colour and painted later in his career, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (acc.no.Per 260.3). An example of the same composition signed by Muhammad Ali Musavvir is in the Musée de Louvre, Paris, and is datable to the second half of the 17th century (acc. no.OA7128). Likely from the same period is an example in the British Museum, London, by Mu'in Musavvir (acc.no.1969,0616,0.3). A third generation of paintings, executed by artists beyond the Safavid realm copying Safavid prototypes, are discussed in the note for lot 31 in this sale. By that stage, the composition - of which this drawing is one of the earliest examples - had become a canonical one used by Safavid artists and those emulating them to show their skill.

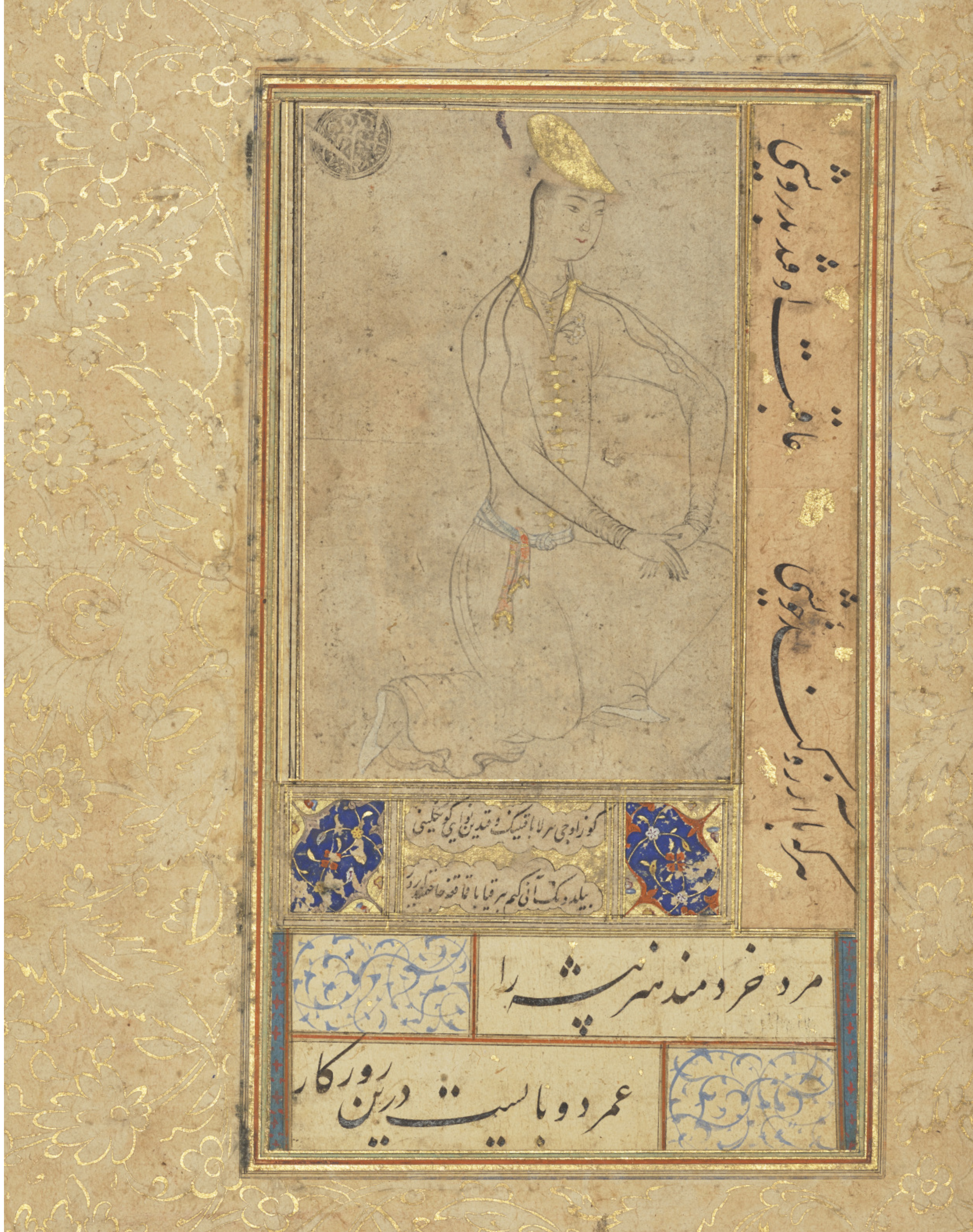
The Louvre has in its collection a handful of other paintings by Shaykh Muhammad, which share many features with the present lot. These include a painting of a seated youth with colour added to the white shoes, the knotted belt, and the gold collar, features shared with the present lot (acc.no.K3427). Both figures also have hair running down in strands, with a strong black line dissipating towards the end as the hair becomes fuzzy. The signature of the artist can be found discreetly below that figure's knee.

Shaykh Muhammad was one of the great Persian masters of the mid to late 16th century and was a member of the royal atelier. He was a pupil of the painter Dust Muhammad (see lot 23), before Dust Muhammad moved to India. For a biography see Bloom and Blair 2009.

The seal in the upper corner was identified by Anthony Welch as that of Shah Abbas, indicating that it entered the royal collection at Qazvin around 1587 (Welch 1972-8, vol.III, p.104). Ada Adamova agrees with this interpretation, adding the painting to her corpus of stamped Safavid royal pictures (Adamova 2000, p.20). Due to loss to the stamp, we have not been able to confirm this royal attribution. A reading of 'Ghulam Husayn Khan' has also been suggested for the seal.



Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc.no.1973.92


مرد خردمند هنر پیشه را
عمر دو بایست درین روزگار

*76

A KNEELING YOUTH

ATTRIBUTED TO SADIQI BEG, SAFAVID QAZVIN OR ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1595-1600

Ink and wash heightened with gold on paper, a panel of *nasta'liq* calligraphy above containing a couplet, laid down between orange borders and gold and polychrome rules on ivory margin stencilled with floral and foliate motifs, reverse plain, mounted
Painting 6¾ x 4⅞in. (17.2 x 12.3cm.); folio 14 x 9⅛in. (35.7 x 23.1cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's London, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer,* 7 July 1980, lot 216

EXHIBITED:

Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.33, pp.105-7
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins,* London, 1998, no.44, p.73
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.44, p.73
A. Welch, "Worldly and Otherwordly Love in Safavi painting", in R. Hillenbrand (ed.), *Persian Paintings from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson*, London, 2000. pp.302, 306, fig.4
M. Barry, *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam and the Riddle of Bihzad of Herat (1465-1535)*, Paris, 2004, p.186

INSCRIPTIONS:

The couplet above the drawing reads, 'O you branch of spring, how nicely you sway. May the torment of time (and breeze) never upset you'

This superb drawing of a youth kneeling in a landscape has been attributed to the great artist and polymath of the late 16th century Sadiqi Beg. It displays an astounding surety of hand and exquisite draughtsmanship.

The calligraphic lines of the figure and drapery are simultaneously firm and delicate and the landscape is brilliantly rendered. Sadiqi Beg's masterful use of lines of varying thickness in the figure, the drapery, the leafy flowers and clouds convey a palpable sense of spontaneity and animation reinforced by the impression that a breeze is propelling the dragon-like clouds across the sky. The refinement of the ink drawing is further enhanced by the subtle use of colours, with pale blue and yellow washes and sudden glints of bright gold in the turban cap, earring, buttons and dagger.

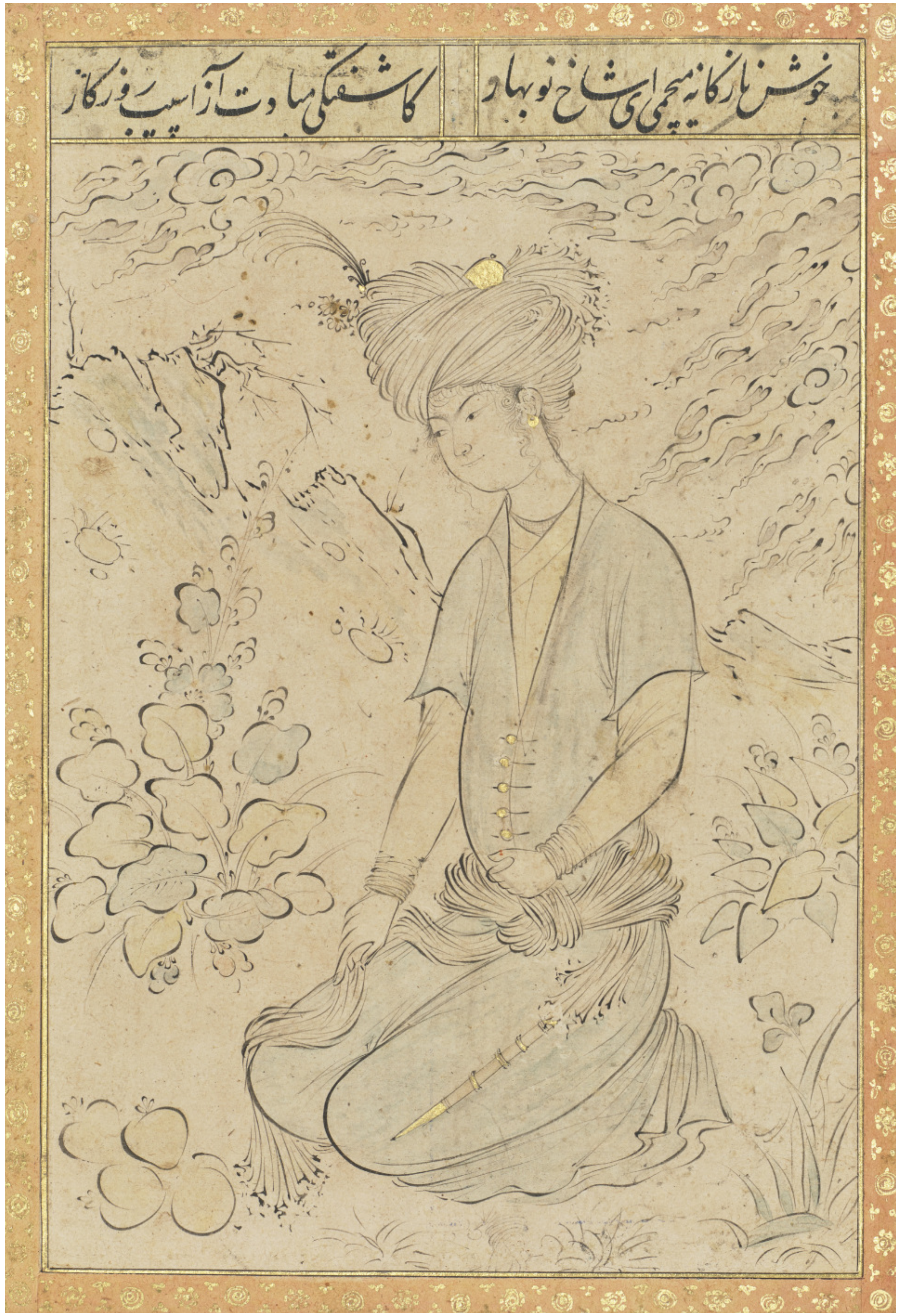
Anthony Welch commented that this "brilliantly rendered stereotype of ideal beauty is an excellent example of Sadiqi Beg's work", and that the beauty of the drawing was related to its function; the couplet at the top, which alludes to the transience of youth and beauty, suggesting that it was intended to be offered as a gift (Welch and Welch 1982, p. 107; Welch 2000, p.302).
Although by the time this drawing was produced Sadiqi Beg was an artist of the older generation, the influence of the emerging calligraphic style that came to be associated with the works of his younger colleague Reza Abbasi are already showing in this work, and he employs it in a supremely confident manner, demonstrating a great ability to innovate and adapt.

There are several closely comparable drawings signed by or ascribed to Sadiqi Beg that portray a youth in a similar pose. The closest two are in the Topkapi Saray Library, Istanbul (H.2146) and the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Suppl. Pers. 1171, f.3v, see Stchoukine 1964, pl.XXX). The drawing in Istanbul, signed "Sadiqi Beg", shows a kneeling youth in a similar landscape setting to the present figure and wearing similar garments. In addition to the similar overall style and pose, certain closely comparable details are worth noting, such as the thin, firm mouth and the shape of the head, the wispy hair, the turban, the curved lines of the knees and the fall of the drapery where his robe spreads out covering his feet behind his legs. The rendering of the rocks in the landscape background is also similar. As Canby pointed out (1998, p.73), the Paris drawing ascribed to Sadiqi Beg is also very close in pose and calligraphic line, in the wispy strands of hair, and especially in the mouth, a distinctive feature consisting of a single horizontal line with a faint secondary line beneath, giving more of a suggestion of lips, perhaps firmly closed, than a fully drawn mouth. Although the Paris example lacks the landscape background, the figure has a similar sense of corporeality. A further similar drawing ascribed to Sadiqi Beg is in the same album in Paris (BNF, Suppl. Pers. 1171, fol.39v, see Stchoukine 1964, pl.XXXI), while a drawing signed "*mashaqahu Sadiqi*", in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (EA1978.2570), depicts an older man with a beard in the same kneeling pose.

This composition was a popular one in the late 16th and 17th century, and among versions by other artists are examples by Reza Abbasi, whose early career overlapped with Sadiqi Beg's later years. Perhaps the closest is a drawing dated 1610 in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (Marlay, Pers. 40, see Canby 1996, cat.51, p.91).

Sadiqi Beg was one of the most remarkable and accomplished figures of the late 16th and early 17th century Iran. Due to the autobiographic aspects of his writings, as well as his long life and many extant works, a great deal more is known about his life and career than most Persian artists. As well as being a superb artist and draughtsman, he was a poet, an important chronicler and biographer, an accomplished calligrapher, spoke several languages and dialects, spent time both as a dervish and as a soldier (fighting bravely at the Battle of Astarabad in 1581), and was a court painter to three shahs (Tahmasp, Isma'il II and Abbas I) as well as royal librarian to Shah Abbas I.

Born into a leading family in Tabriz in 1533-4, he first studied poetry under Mir San'i at Tabriz. In 1568 he moved to Qazvin and at the relatively mature age of thirty-four began studying painting under Muzaffar Ali, one of the great masters of the previous age. His inherent talent was quickly appreciated and he entered the royal atelier, working for Shah Tahmasp and Shah Isma'il II in Qazvin, and after a period away from the royal atelier between 1578 and 1588, he returned to Qazvin upon the accession of Shah Abbas I and was appointed as royal librarian. His range as an artist was equally remarkable, contributing illustrations to *Garshaspnama* produced for Shah Tahmasp (British Library, Or. MS.12985) and to the *Shahnama* manuscripts produced for Shah Isma 'il II (1576, dispersed) and Shah Abbas I (1590-1600, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Per. 277), painting numerous single-page studies, pioneering experimentation with European prints (Harvard Art Museums, 1999.289, see McWilliams 2004). He wrote poetry and highly significant treatises on painting and painters, including the *Qanun al-Sawar* (Canons of Painting, c.1576-1602, written in verse), and the "Concourse of the Elite" (*Majma' al-Khawass*, early 1590s). He died in Isfahan in 1610. For the fullest description and discussion of his life and works see Welch 1976, pp.41-100. See also Bloom and Blair 2009, vol.3, pp.16-1; Barry 2004, pp.185-188; Bailey 2000; Skelton 2000; McWilliams 2004.


خوش نازکانه میچمی ای شاخ نوبهار
کاشفتگی مبادت از آسیب روزگار

TWO MAGNIFICENT PORTRAITS BY THE MASTER REZA ABBASI

> “Aqa Riza is the son of Maulana Ali Asghar; it is fitting that the present age should be proud of his existence, for in the flower of his youth he brought the elegance of his brushwork, portraiture, and likeness to such a degree that, if Mani and Behzad were living today, they would praise his hand and brush a hundred times a day. In this age he has no rival; master painters, skillful artists who live in our times regard him as perfect”
>
> **QADI AHMAD, *GULISTAN-I HUNAR*, AH 1015/1606 AD**

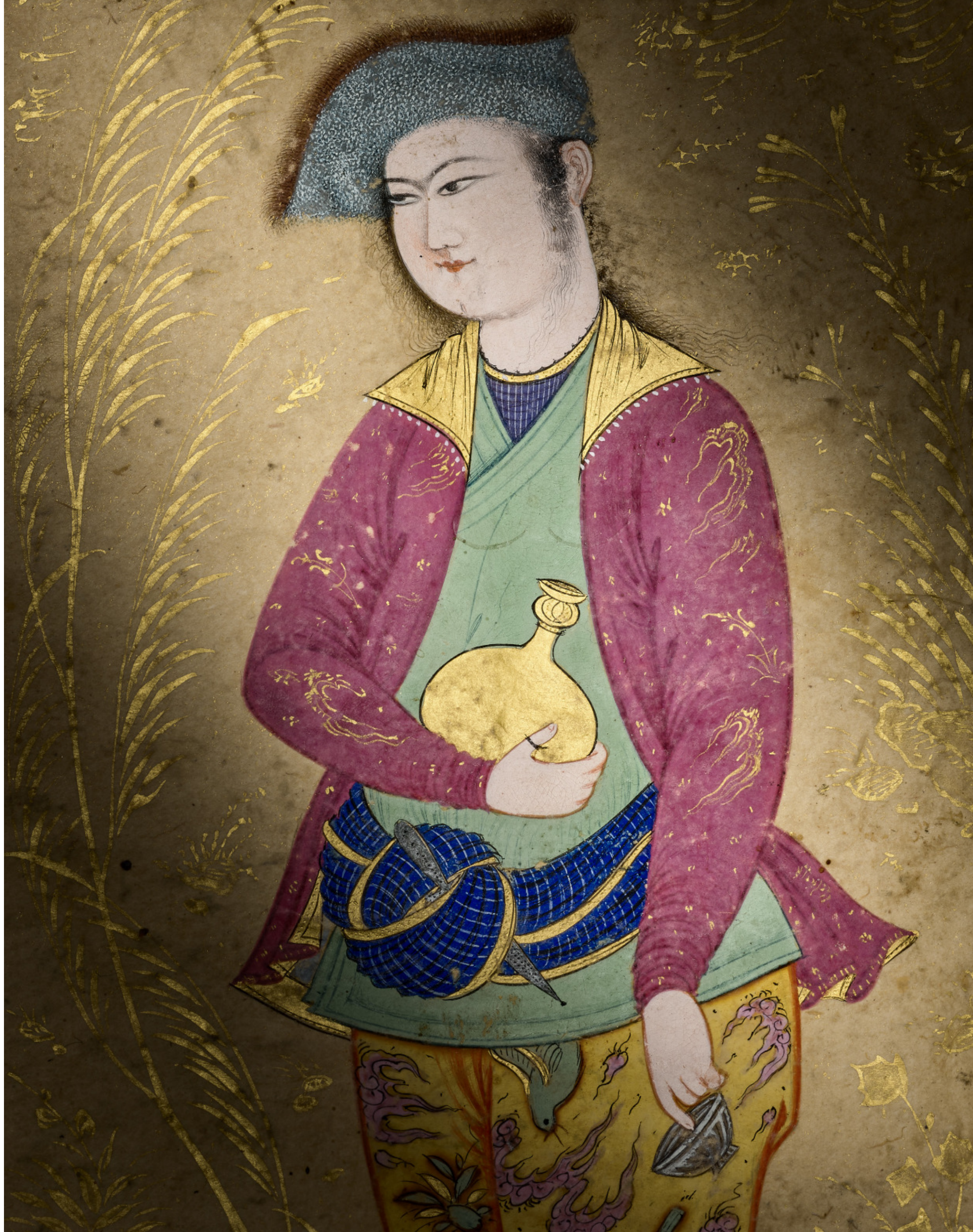
Reza Abbasi (fl. c. 1586-1635) was the greatest painter of the court of Shah Abbas I of Persia (r. 1587-1629) and one of the most famous of all Persian artists. Canby states that no introduction to Islamic art is complete without the mention of his name and that his brilliance and fame surpassed all of his contemporaries. His paintings and drawings brilliantly convey a wide range of themes, including the yearning for the beloved, mystical union with God, age and the passage of time, street-life, fashion and technology and cosmopolitanism. He was socially diverse and aware and during his career he interacted with a wide variety of people, from the shah himself and the royal court to wrestlers and ne’er-do-wells on the streets (Canby 1990 and 1996).

He was born around 1565 and was the son of the court painter Ali Ashgar, who had worked for Shah Tahmasp and Sultan Ibrahim Mirza. His earliest works were close in style to the prevailing Qazvin court style of the 1570s and 1580s, but were “infused with the fresh vision of a brilliant young artist” and already displayed his own emerging style in areas such as the treatment of drapery (Canby 1996, p.24). His earliest surviving dated work is 1591 (Topkapi Saray Library, Istanbul, MS.H.2166, fol.18a, see Canby 1996, cat.14), although his career is thought to have begun in the mid-1580s. Early in his career he produced highly accomplished single figure studies characterised by a fine calligraphic style, as well as manuscript illustrations, including several for a *Shahnama* probably made for Shah Abbas on his accession to the throne in 1587 (Arberry et al 1962, p.49). At that stage he signed his name “Aqa Reza” or “Reza”, but his talent and virtuosity was noted by Shah Abbas at an early stage, and in 1598 he was given the title “Abbasi”, signifying his favoured status as painter laureate. This coincided with the move of the royal capital from Qazvin to Isfahan. From then on, he increasingly used the signature “Reza Abbasi”.

For a period of approximately seven years from 1603 Reza went through a Bohemian phase during which he took up with “hapless people and libertines” and became “addicted to watching wrestling” (Qadi Ahmad, see Minorsky 1959, p.193). The beginning of this period coincided with Shah Abbas’s four-year absence on military campaign in Azerbaijan and Shirvan, which may have contributed to Reza’s disaffection, and Canby suggests that Reza may also have converted to Sufism during this period. For these seven years Reza’s output consisted mostly of drawings of wrestlers and dervishes in a dynamic and spontaneous style (Canby 1996, ch.6).

From 1610 onwards, possibly for financial reasons, Reza returned with renewed vigour to more mainstream productions, illustrating several manuscripts. In his fully mature phase in the 1620s and early 1630s he produced exquisitely refined portraits of courtiers, idealized maidens and youths, including several in European costume, as well as drawings of shaykhs, dervishes, poets and greybeards. Anthony Welch commented that his works from this period show a confidence in style and subject matter which goes beyond the stereotyped court images to record many other social strata, and that he brought new observations and experiences into his compositions (Welch and Welch 1982, pp.107-09), and Canby noted an attention to psychological aspects through his skilful suggestions of subtle irony and nostalgia (Canby 1990, p.84). His mature style was characterised by superlatively fluid lines, which he used to great effect to define the contours of forms and the undulations and folds of drapery. He used deep, rich colours and showed a keen interest in ornate textiles. The figures were often set in idealised landscapes and imbued with a strong sense of romanticism. The two works by Reza Abbasi in the present sale (lots 77-78) are magnificent examples of this mature phase of his career, when his superlative skills as an artist combined with a sense of settled confidence.

During these years he also became an outstanding teacher, mentoring the next generation of artists such as Mu‘in Musavvir (see lots 85-87), Muhammad Yusuf (see lot 80) and Reza’s own son Shafi Abbasi, giving them a firm grounding in the techniques and style of the period and yet allowing them to develop their own individual styles. Anthony Welch commented that it testifies to Reza’s own genius that he could foster the genius in others, and in doing so establish himself as the guiding spirit of 17th-century figural art in Iran (Welch and Welch 1982, p.109). The most complete accounts of Reza’s life and works are Canby 1990; Canby 1996; Stchoukine 1964, pp.85-133.



*77

A STANDING YOUTH WITH A CUP AND A BOTTLE

SIGNED BY REZA ABBASI, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, DATED 1 RABI I AH 1034/12 DECEMBER 1624 AD

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, signed and dated in Persian at lower left, gold inner rules, laid onto blue borders stencilled with gold scrolling foliate motifs, single outer blue rule, the ivory margins similarly decorated, reverse plain with seal impression of Ali Akbar ibn Fath Ali, and later owner marks and labels, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 3½in. (19 x 9cm.); folio 12¼ x 7⅞in. (31 x 20cm.)

£150,000-250,000
US$210,000-340,000
€180,000-290,000

PROVENANCE:

Octave Homberg (1876-1941), Paris, before 1931
Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, *Collection Homberg*, 3-5 June 1931, lot 111, pl.XLIX.
Collection of Hagop Kevorkian, New York, before 1962
Sotheby' s London, *Highly Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures, Property of the Kevorkian Foundation,* 1 December 1969, lot 79

EXHIBITED:

Persian Exhibition, Iranian Institute, New York, 1940
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3.
Treasures of Islam, Musée Rath, Geneva, 1985
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

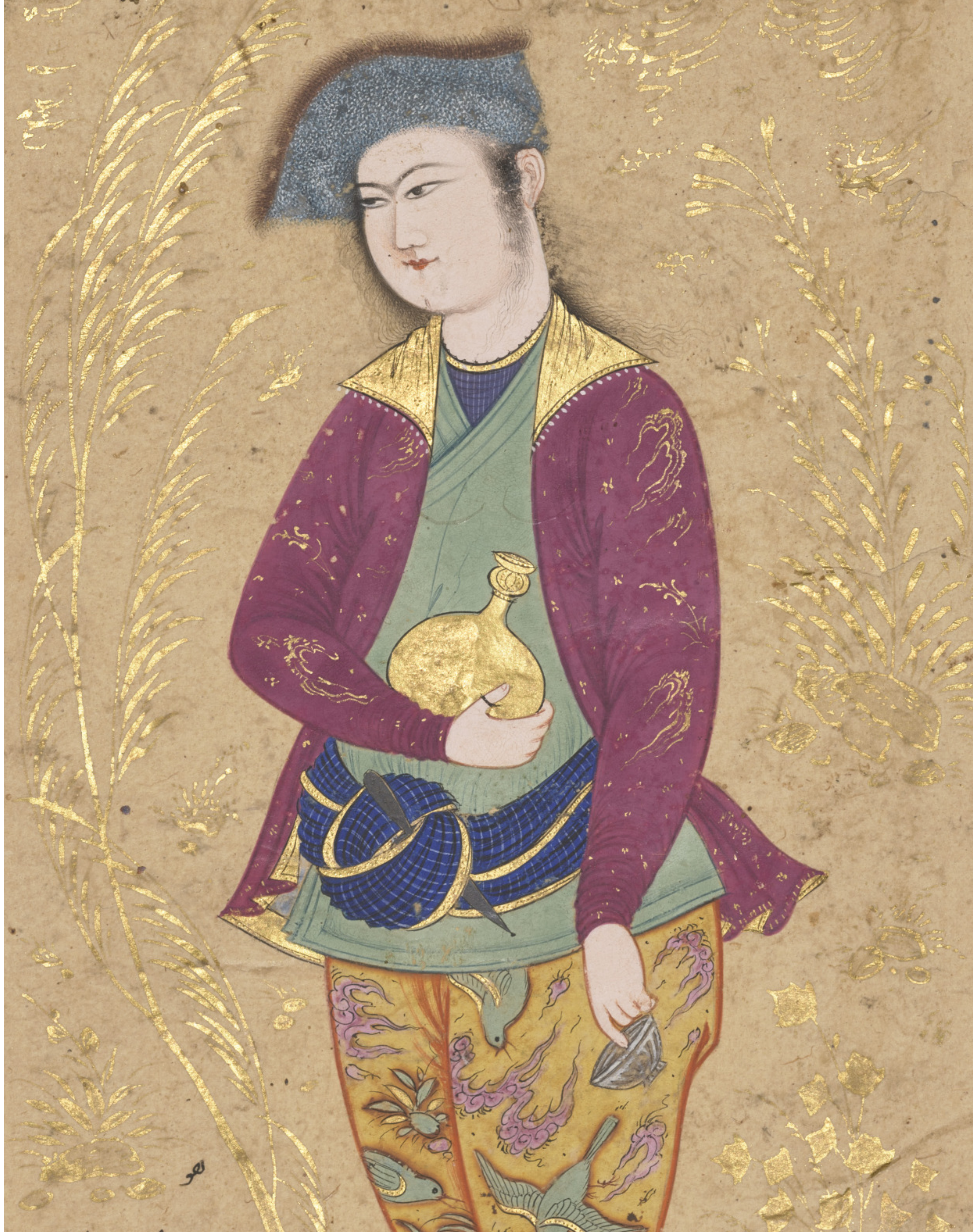
LITERATURE:

E. Kuhnel, "History of Miniature Painting and Drawing", in A. Upham Pope and P. Ackerman (eds.), *A Survey of Persian Art*, Oxford, 1938-9, vol.III, p.1,886
B.W. Robinson, *The Kevorkian Collection: Islamic and Indian Illustrated Manuscripts, Miniatures and Drawings,* unpublished manuscript, New York, 1953, no. CCLVII
I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à la fin des Safavis,* Paris, 1964, p.110
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol.III, 1978, pp.128-9
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.34, pp.107-09
T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam*, Geneva, 1985, no.85, p.116
S. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer, The Drawings and Paintings of Reza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996, cat.114, pp.151, 154-6, 198
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.47, pp.74-6
S. Canby, *Der Glanz des Orients,* Zurich, 1998, no.13, pp.50-1
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.47, pp.74-6
J. Scarce, "Safavid Dress and Europe", in E. Langer (ed.), *The Fascination of Persia,* Zurich, 2013, p.62, fig.22.B
Brinkmann, G. Dette, O. Westheider, M. Philipp, G. Schwartz, *Rembrandt's Orient, West Meets East in Dutch Art of the 17th Century*, Munich, 2020, p.51, fig.14
De Hond, Jan, Couvrat-Desvergnes, Amélie, Sauvage, Leila, Sajadi, Foroughi and Paolo d'Imporzano, "An Iranian Youth in an Album from Zwolle", The Rijkmuseum Bulletin, Vol.68, No.3, 2020, p.223, fig.29

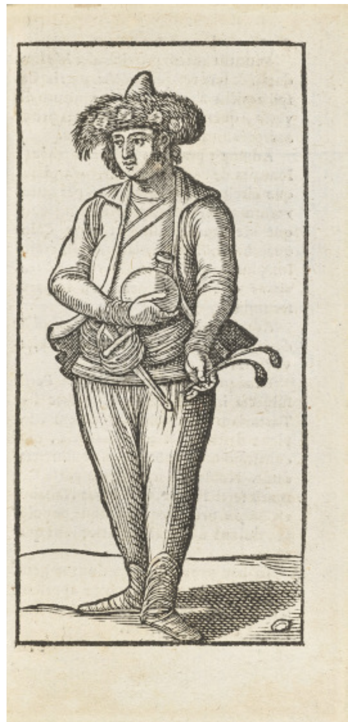
INSCRIPTIONS:

"He [is God]. Completed on 1 Rabi' al-Awwal 1034 [12 December 1624]. The work of the humble Reza Abbasi"

> "This masterful painting perfectly expresses the type. Its maker, Riza-yi Abbasi, clearly owed much to earlier artists like Mirza Ali and Shaykh Muhammad, but he developed the image with such fluency and to such a pitch of grace that it became a kind of icon in seventeenth-century painting in Iran"
>
> **ANTHONY WELCH**



In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol. Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.



Woodcut from Johannes de Laet, *Persia seu Regni Persici Status*, Leiden, 1633

This is an outstanding painting by Reza Abbasi (ca.1565–1635), regarded as the most innovative and influential later Safavid artist and the most gifted painter at the court of Shah Abbas I. Along with the following lot, it is among the finest single-page portraits by the artist to appear at auction for many decades.

It is highly significant not only as an exceptional example of Reza's work, but also because of a fascinating historical link to the Dutch embassy that visited the court of Shah Abbas I from 1623 to 1630, for the figure depicted here appears to have been used as a compositional model for a woodcut that appeared in the Johannes de Laet's *Persia seu Regni Persici Status*, published in Leiden in 1633 (illustrated here; also de Hond 2020A, pp.48–51).

Although the use of European images as sources for Persian art in the 17th century is widely acknowledged and has been extensively studied (see, e.g., Langer 2013, pp.170–237), the use of Persian paintings as sources in European art was extremely rare, and the link of the present painting to the Dutch embassy of 1623 and de Laet's 1633 publication is significant (for an interesting equivalent involving Mughal paintings used as sources for works by Rembrandt in the 1650s, see Schrader 2018).

The subject of the present work is an elegant standing youth in fashionable garments, gazing into the distance and seemingly lost in thought. He wears a jacket of rich maroon with a gold collar, a green waistcoat over a blue-patterned shirt with gold trim, and richly-patterned mustard-yellow trousers. Around his waist is a rich blue patterned sash with gold stripes and a dagger thrust through the knot, and on his head is a fur-trimmed hat. He holds a gold bottle in his right hand just above his waistband, and his left hand hangs by his side holding a cup. One of the most striking features is the rich design of the trousers, consisting of a miniature landscape scene with birds perched on rocks and fluttering in the air (see also lot 78). The sheer quality and attention to detail is revealed in the delicate pricking of the gold, which appears not only on the collar of the waistcoat, a relatively broad expanse of gold, but also on the gold neck-trim of the shirt, on the mouth of the gold bottle, and even, almost invisibly, on the slender gold stripes of the waistband and the very narrow gold leading edges of the birds' wings within the textiles on the trousers. It is a highly refined image and a superlative example of Reza's fully mature style.

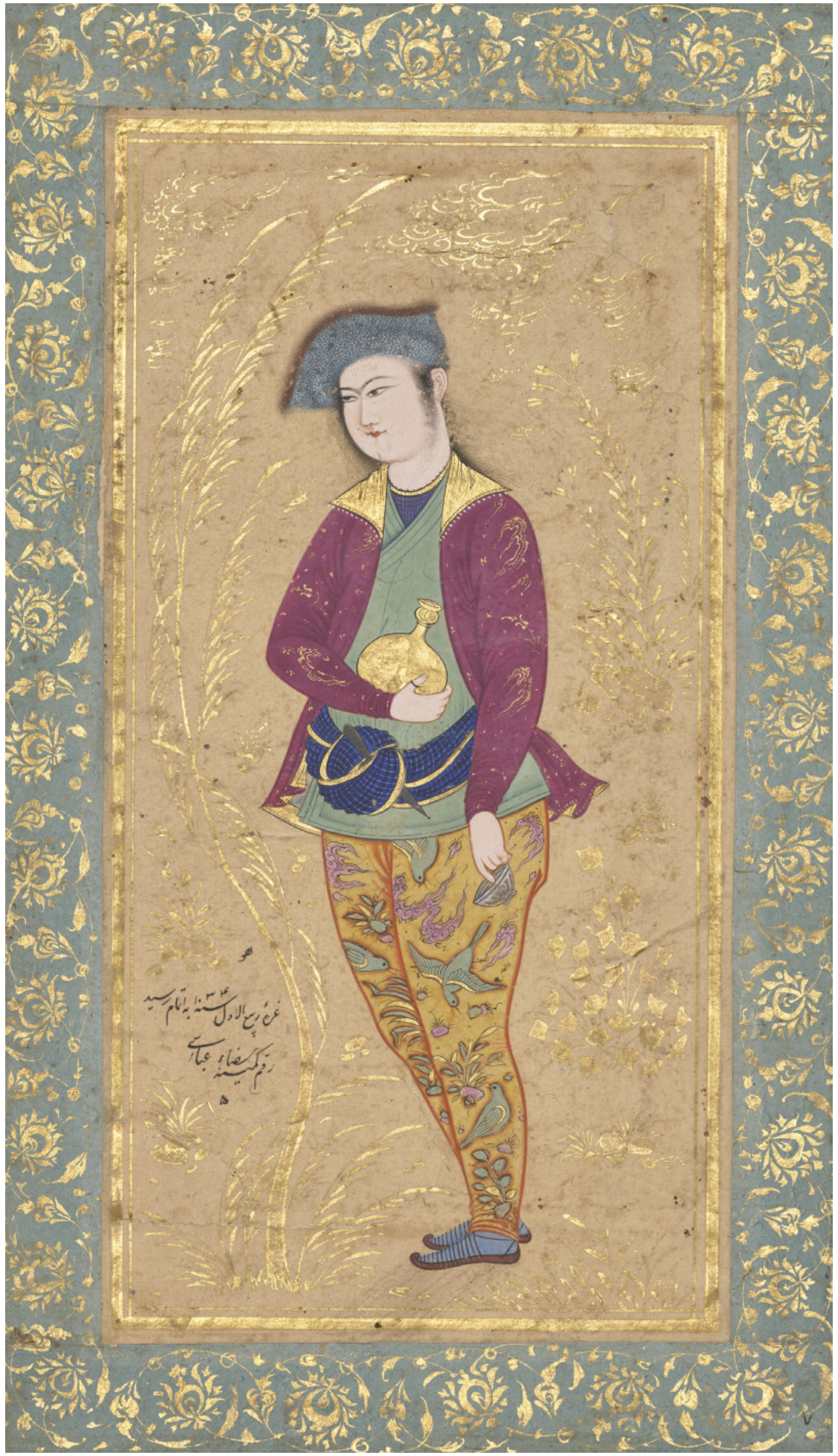
In the early 1620s, following encouraging overtures from the court of Shah Abbas, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) sent an Embassy to Persia. It was led by Huybert Visnich and arrived in Iran in 1623. At the time, a Flemish painter called Jan Lucasz van Hasselt was residing in Isfahan, where he had been in the employ of Shah Abbas since 1617. He was greatly favoured by the shah and became a confidant, and was given the title "*ustad naqqash*" (master painter). Van Hasselt arranged for his visiting countrymen in the embassy to be given certain privileges and to be housed in a grand residence that was the envy of other European delegations, where Visnich stayed until December 1630. For detailed discussions of this historical context see de Hond 2020A; de Hond 2020B; Schwartz 2013; Croymans 2018.

During his decade residing in Isfahan, Van Hasselt would very likely have been acquainted with Reza Abbasi, who also worked for the Shah Abbas, and it is probable that members of the Dutch embassy might also have come into contact with Reza through Van Hasselt's courtly artistic circles. One of the members of the Dutch embassy was Niclaes Hem (Nicolaus Hemmius), a merchant and negotiator. De Laet states that the figures in the woodcuts in his 1633 *Persia seu Regni Persici Status* were based on Persian drawings brought from Iran by Niclaes Hem on his return to the Netherlands (de Hond 2020A, p.50; Schwartz in Brinkmann et al 2020, p.272). The dating of the present picture in relation to the embassy is relevant. It was completed in December 1624, eighteen months after the Dutch embassy's arrival and therefore during the period in which they were in Isfahan and in frequent contact with Van Hasselt, and through him with the courtly artistic milieu of the city.

Although the figure in de Laet's woodcut has been rendered according to Western conventions, with greater three-dimensionality, shadowing and a Europeanised face (de Hond 2020A, p.48), generally it is extremely similar to the present figure, and a number of details are identical. The figure in the woodcut wears the same jacket, which splays at the waist in a distinctively similar way, an identical waistcoat, which protrudes below the knotted waistband, as well as a dagger thrust through the knot in the waistband. Visible at the neck is an identical undershirt with a narrow trim, and the trousers are also of a similar form. He holds a bottle in his right hand in exactly the same position and of the same shape as in the present Reza painting, and his left arm hangs at his side is a similar pose. The only differences are that in his left hand he holds two flowers instead of a wine cup and the top part of his hat is slightly different.

It seems very likely that Niclaes Hem saw this painting while in Isfahan, so close are the similarities to the figure in de Laet's woodcut, and de Hond suggests that such pictures were brought to the Netherlands by Hem in the late 1620s, providing the models for the woodcuts in *Persia seu Regni Persici Status* (de Hond 202A, p.48). A very similar work by Reza Abbasi, undated but attributed to c. 1625–30 (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Per.260.2, see Canby 1996, cat.115,p.157) may also have influenced the woodcut in de Laet's book. It is very close to the present work in pose and garments, and the hat in the woodcut is a combination of the hat of the present figure and that of the Dublin version. However, although the youth in both the Reza works is holding a round bottle, in the Dublin version he is clasping the bottle against his belly with both hands, whereas here and in the de Laet woodcut he is holding the bottle with one hand while the other hand hangs by his side. In the Dublin version there is also a wine cup tucked into the lapel of his waistcoat, which does not feature in the woodcut or the present work. The present work is thus a closer model.

Anthony Welch suggested that the present painting was made for Shah Abbas (Welch and Welch 1982, p.109), and it has been suggested that Reza Abbasi was painting for a variety courtly patrons and wealthy merchants in Isfahan at this stage of his career (de Hond 202A, p.48). It is appealing to imagine the cultured scene in Isfahan in the 1620s in which members of the Dutch embassy, through their friend Van Hasselt, might have interacted with Reza Abbasi and been eye-witnesses to this key period in Persian painting, possibly even commissioning works themselves from Reza.


هو
غرهٔ ربیع الاول سنة ۳۴ به اتمام رسید
رقم کمینه رضا عباسی
۵

*78

A YOUTH WITH THREE CUPS

SIGNED BY REZA ABBASI, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, DATED 20 DHU'L-QA'DA AH 1038/12 JULY 1629 AD

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, signed and dated in Persian at lower left, laid down between salmon-pink margins borders with gold flecks, gold and polychrome rules, the margins decorated with animals and mythical creatures amidst foliage, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7⅛ x 3½in. (18.1 x 8.8cm.); folio 14 x 9in. (35.8 x 22.8cm.)

£150,000-250,000
US$210,000-340,000
€180,000-290,000

PROVENANCE:
Sevadjian Collection, Paris, early 20th century
Hotel Drouot, Paris, *Collection Sevadjian,* 23 November 1960, lot 15
Adrienne Minassian, New York, 1969

EXHIBITED:
Shah Abbas and the Arts of Isfahan, Asia House Gallery, New York; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, 1973-4
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à la fin des Safavis*, Paris, 1964, p.119
A. Welch, *Shah Abbas and the Arts of Isfahan*, New York, 1973, no.50, pp.72, 82
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.130-1
S. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer, The Drawings and Paintings of Reza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996, cat.118, pp.158, 161, 163, 198-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.48, pp.75-6
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.48. pp.75-6
J. Scarce, "Safavid Dress and Europe", in E. Langer (ed.), *The Fascination of Persia*, Zurich, 2013, p.62, fig.21
B. Brinkmann, G. Dette, O. Westheider, M. Philipp, G. Schwartz, *Rembrandt's Orient, West Meets East in Dutch Art of the 17th Century,* Munich, 2020, p.51, fig.17
De Hond, Jan, Couvrat-Desvergnes, Amélie, Sauvage, Leila, Sajadi, Foroughi and Paolo d'Imporzano, "An Iranian Youth in an Album from Zwolle", The Rijkmuseum Bulletin, Vol.68, No.3, 2020, p.206, fig.3

INSCRIPTIONS:
"He [is God]. Completed on Thursday 20 Dhu'l Qa'da 1038 [12 July 1629]. The work of the humble Reza Abbasi"

This elegant, richly attired figure of a youth by the Safavid master Reza Abbasi was described by Anthony Welch as a "paradigm of luxury" (Welch and Welch 1982, p.82). Along with the previous lot, it is among the finest single-page portraits by Shah Abbas's favourite artist to appear at auction for many decades.

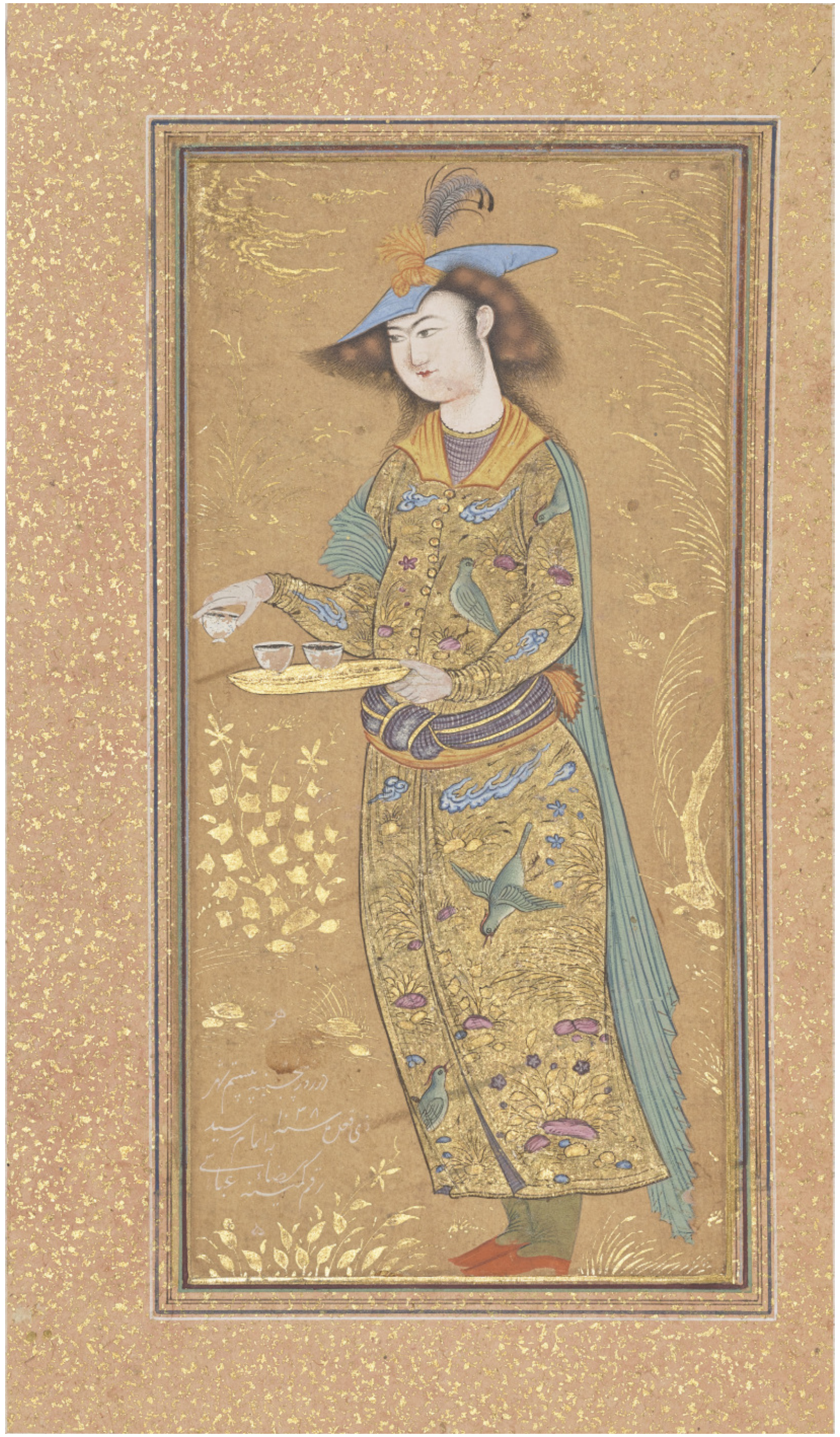
The graceful figure stands in an open pose holding in his left hand a tray bearing two cups. In his right hand he holds a third cup which he is offering to an unseen person outside the picture, towards whom he gazes with a studied look. He wears a long, two-tone gold robe sumptuously decorated with a landscape scene containing green birds, pink and gold rocks, blue and purple flowers and blue cloudbands. Beneath his robe is a lavender shirt with a delicately-pricked gold trim.

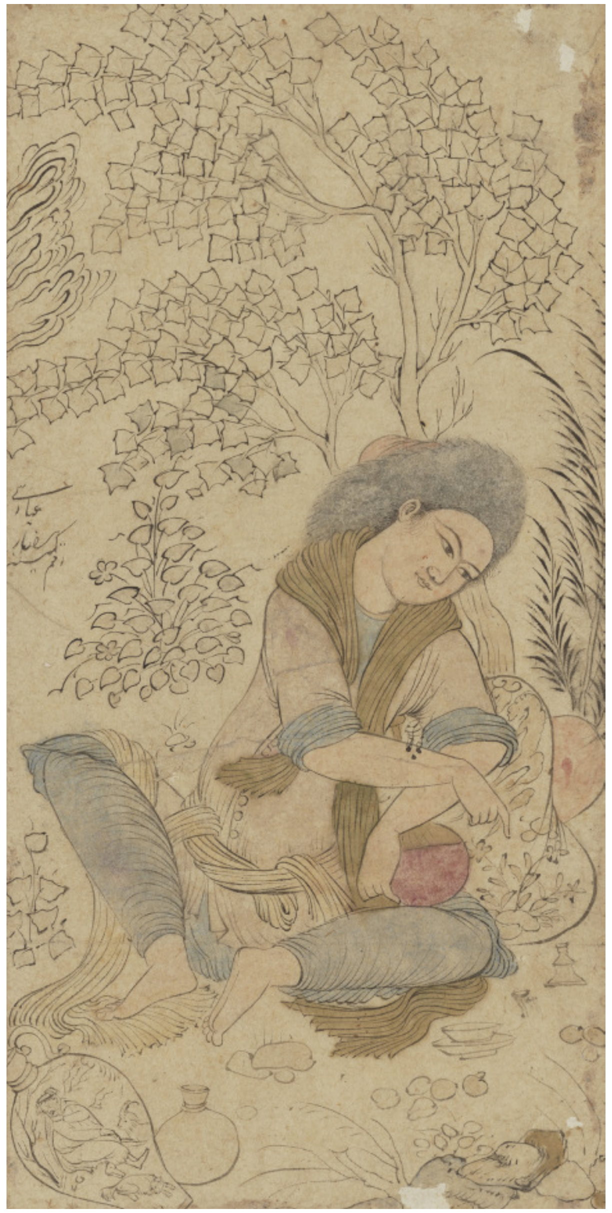
Over his shoulder and tucked under his arm is a long green shawl, and round his waist is a blue and gold sash with a second orange sash beneath. On his head he wears a blue hat with a thick fur lining (the delineation of the individual strands of fur is superb), with an orange scarf tied round it and a feather protruding from the top. At the lower left is the signature of Reza Abbasi, in white ink.

As well as the overall refinement of the image and the elegant calligraphic lines of the robe and the shawl, there are several other elements worth exploring. The colour balance is exceptional: the green of the shawl is picked up again in the birds within the textiles; the pale blue of the hat is picked up again in the cloudbands and some of the rocks and flowers in the textile; the orange of the collar is picked up again in the knotted scarf tied round his hat and the second sash round his waist; the darker blue/lavender is used in the waistband, the undershirt, the lower flowers in the textile and the lining of the robe (which is visible at the lower corner where it is turned back); the red of the shoes is picked out in the tiny crests of the birds; and the paler gold is used in the majority of rocks in the textile, in the tray holding the cups and in the background landscape. Reza skilfully conveys a subtle sense of movement and spontaneity through the fact that the shawl is slipping off the youth's right shoulder. A second such element comes in the lower corners of the robe, which have fluttered back revealing the lining, as if a gentle breeze is blowing from the left, a sense reinforced by the scudding cloudbands in the sky. Finally, the birds in the textile, two flying and two perched on the ground, are actively engaged with each other across the folds of garment and animatedly conversing.

It is noticeable that the birds consist of two pairs. The inclusion of pairs of birds was a visual trope in Persian and Indian painting (and other traditions) often symbolising romance and fidelity. Canby stated that Reza's works such as this may have been intended as visual analogies for Persian poems of yearning for the absent beloved, both earthly and divine (Canby 1998, p.76), and it is tempting here to see the pairs of birds as well as the absent person to whom the youth is offering the cup as being subtle symbols of this romantic ideal – the painful absence of union in the human contrasted with the natural union of the pairs of birds.

Reza painted other similar portraits in this period. One, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (MS. Suppl. Pers.1572, fol.8, see Richard 1997, p.205, no.150; Canby 1996, cat.117, p.198) is particularly close to the present example in pose, hat and garments, although the Paris figure is holding a bottle and cup across his body rather than a tray and cups, lacks the long shawl, and his robe is less ornate. Comparison of the present portrait with the Paris example shows how important the use of the lavish "inhabited" textile and the half-slipping shawl are in enlivening the present figure, which has a much greater sense of luxury and animation than the Paris version.





***79**

A YOUNG MAN UNDER A TREE

AFTER REZA ABBASI, SAFAVID IRAN, 17TH CENTURY OR LATER

Ink and watercolour on paper, apocryphal inscription at left, laid down on a sheet of blank 19th century paper, seal impression of Hussainali Hidayatullah in upper border, reverse plain with label of the 1931 London exhibition, mounted
Painting 7½ x 3¾in. (19 x 9.4cm.); folio 11 x 7¼in. (28 x 18.5cm.)

£4,000-6,000
US$5,500-8,200
€4,700-6,900

PROVENANCE:
Hussainali Hidayatullah
Hyacinthe-Louis Rabino di Borgomale, C.M.G., (1877-1950), British Consul at Rasht, Iran, subsequently British Consul General in Cairo and Smyrna, before 1931

EXHIBITED:
International Exhibition of Persian Art, Burlington House, London, 1931

LITERATURE:
H.-L. Rabino, "Les provinces caspiennes de la Perse, le Guîlân", *Revue du Monde Musulman*, vol. XXXII, Paris, 1916-17, pl.30
Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1931, no.705, p.287
G. Wiet, *L'exposition persane de 1931 (à Londres)*, Cairo, 1933, pl.XXXIX
L. Binyon, J.V.S. Wilkinson and B. Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting*, London, 1933, no.323, p.173
I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à la fin des Safavis*, Paris, 1964, p. 12
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol.I, 1972, no.38, pp.189, 193
S. Canby, *The Rebellious Reformer, The Drawings and Paintings of Reza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996, p.207, no.15

INSCRIPTIONS:
'Work of the humble Reza-i Abbasi'

This paintings has been a source of debate among scholars. In 1978, Anthony Welch followed Stchoukine in claiming this painting to be the authentic work of Reza Abbasi, writing that 'the excellent quality of the drawing [...] confirms the genuineness of the signature'. Years later, in her monograph on the artist, Sheila Canby rejected the attribution, arguing that 'the treatment of the fur hat' was incorrect for the artist, since the effect was achieved by 'by smudging the pigment instead of through Reza's customary use of fine lines' (Canby 1996, p.207). Even if the signature is rejected, this painting is a faithful homage to Reza's style, the figure perhaps most reminiscent of another barefoot youth in the Art and History Trust, Houston, Texas (published Canby 1996, no.35, p.184).

The burn marks on the figure's arm are likely to have been self-inflicted, either as a sign of devotion to the figure's partner or to the divine. The practice is described by Don Juan of Persia, an Iranian convert to Catholicism, who described in his memoirs how 'the lover who would prove that his love is sincere must painfully burn himself in various parts of his person with a slow match' to prove the depth of his affection (Le Strange 1926, p.54). A painting signed by Afzal al-Husayni and dated AH 1056/1646-7 AD depicts a woman inflicting these burns on her lover (Canby, 1998, no.50, pp.77-8). The effects of these burns can also be seen on the badly-scarred figure, often described as a dervish, in a painting in the British Museum (acc.no.1920,0917,0.298.4).

The present drawing was owned by Hyacinthe-Louis Rabindo di Borgomale, a career diplomat who was posted to Rasht in 1906, where he developed a particular fascination for the history of the Caspian provinces of Iran. In spite of later postings to Morocco, Izmir, Thessaloniki, and Cairo, his scholarship remained focussed on Iran. Though he lent seven paintings and drawings to the 1931 Burlington House exhibition, his particular speciality was numismatics. He published several articles in the Numismatic Chronicle between 1908 and 1950, as well as a monograph entitled 'Coins, medals, and seals of the Shahs of Iran 1500-1941' in 1945. After his death he was awarded the medal of the Royal Numismatic Society, and many of his coins are now in the British Museum.

***80**

A YOUNG MAN KNEELING IN A LANDSCAPE

ATTRIBUTED TO MUHAMMAD ALI OR MUHAMMAD YUSUF AL-HUSAYNI, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1650

Ink on paper, in brown paper border decorated with stellate petals, the cream paper margins with scrolling floral motifs reserved on pink ground, reverse plain
Painting 6½ x 4⅜in. (16.5 x 11cm.); folio 13⅞ x 9½in. (35.2 x 24cm.)

£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

PROVENANCE:
By repute Charles Vignier (1863-1934), Paris, before 1934
Adrienne Minassian, New York, 1969

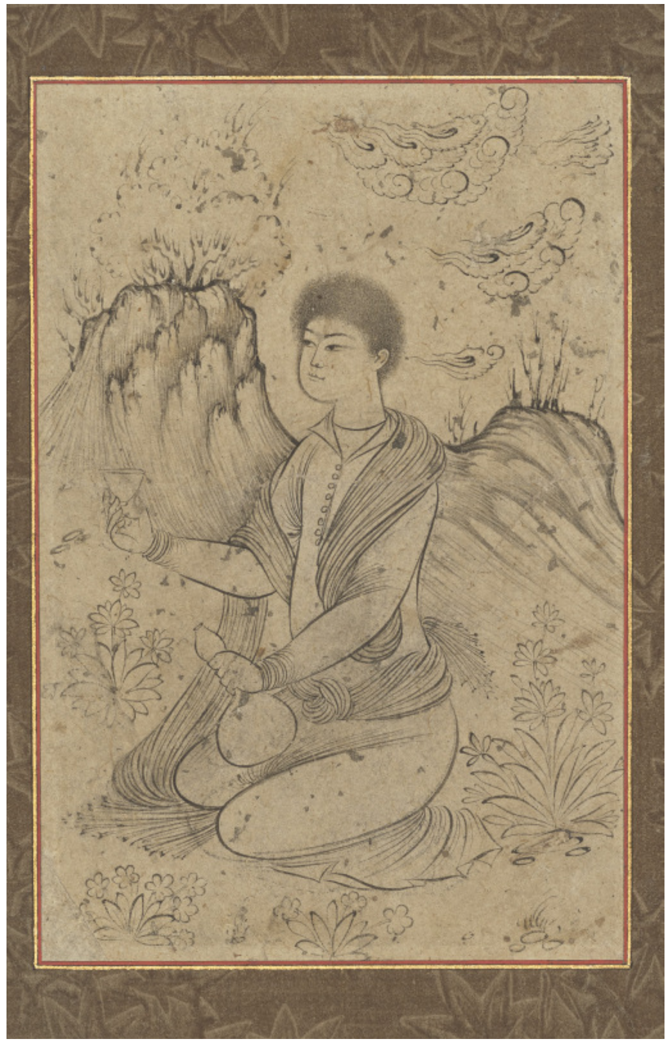
EXHIBITED:
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.140-1
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.51, pp.78-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.51, pp.78-9

Perhaps the most technically impressive feature of this painting is the manner in which the figure's hair has been realised. The fuzzy texture is achieved by the accumulation of small strokes done with a reed pen. A similar execution can be seen on two pen and ink drawings attributed by Sheila Canby to Reza Abbasi. One is in the Keir collection (Canby 1996, cat.23), and another in the Art and History Trust (cat.30). A similar technique is also used to draw Majnun's hair in an anonymous drawing in the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg (acc.no.VP-704).

Though the technical mastery of this drawing suggests that it was executed by a skilled artist, the identity of that artist has been debated. In 1978, Anthony Welch suggested an attribution to Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni. The overall composition of our drawing closely resembles that of a signed painting in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (acc.no.VP-739). In that painting, a turbaned youth sits in a landscape with a dramatic rocky outcrop behind him. The rendering of textiles, particularly the creases to the figure's sleeves and cuffs and the manner in which he has fastened his belt, does bear a close resemblance to our figure, and may indicate the same artist.

Sheila Canby, however, suggests that this painting should instead be associated with Muhammad Ali Musavvir, an artist whose style had much in common with Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni. In particular, she suggests that the rich vegetation in our painting is more suggestive of Muhammad Ali's style, as demonstrated by a signed painting of his in the British Museum London (acc.no.1948,1009,0.63), which also features whirling Chinese-style clouds. Still more similar to ours is a fragmentary drawing in the Brooklyn Museum (acc.no.86.227.168). The folds on the crinkled turban of that figure closely resemble those on the shawl draped around our figure's shoulders. Moreover, the dessicated trees which appear in the background of our drawing resemble one which appears in the foreground of the Brooklyn Museum's drawing.



> "One must assume that works such as this were not portraits of specific individuals but rather renderings that expressed ideals of youth and beauty"
>
> **SHEILA CANBY**

*81

A STANDING YOUTH HOLDING A POEM, PROBABLY A SELF-PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

THE PAINTING SIGNED BY MUHAMMAD QASIM, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1610-30; THE CALLIGRAPHY ON THE VERSO BY ALI AL-MASHHADI, WRITTEN FOR NUR AL-DIN NI'MATULLAH, SAFAVID QAZVIN, IRAN, DATED AH 971/1563-4 AD

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the youth holding a panel inscribed in black *nasta'liq* identifying the artist, laid down within pink inner and cream outer paper borders within gold and polychrome rules, dark pink margins, gold and polychrome outer rules, reverse with 9ll. fine black *nasta'liq* reserved in clouds on gilded cream paper, laid down within yellow borders and gold and polychrome rules, plain pink margins with gold and polychrome outer rules, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 4⅛in. (19.1 x 10.4cm.); calligraphic panel 7⅜ x 3⅞in. (18.8 x 9.9cm.); folio 13⅛ x 9¼in. (33.4 x 23.5cm.)

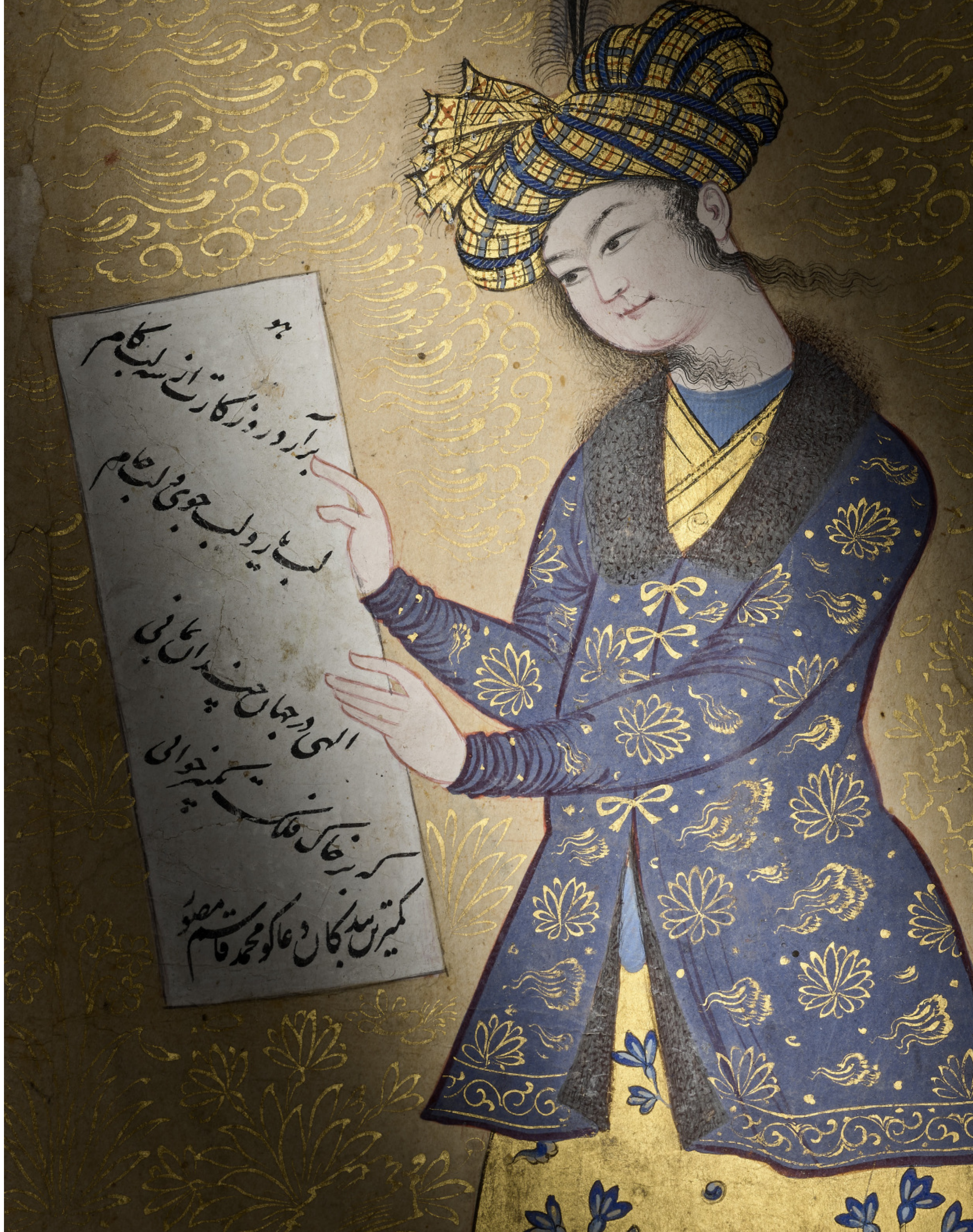
£150,000-250,000
US$210,000-340,000
€180,000-290,000

PROVENANCE:
E. Beghian (1877-1962), London, before 1931
Hagop Kevorkian, New York, before 1940
Sotheby's London, *Highly Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures, Property of the Kevorkian Foundation*, 1 December 1969, lot 84

EXHIBITED:
International Exhibition of Persian Art, Burlington House, London, 1931
Persian Exhibition, The Iranian Institute, New York, 1940
Calligraphy in the Arts of the Muslim World, Asia Society, New York and the University of Texas, Austin, 1979
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran safavide 1501-1736, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2007

LITERATURE:
Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1931, no.660, p.280
L. Binyon, J.V.S. Wilkinson and B. Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting*, London, 1933, no.294, p.169
P. Ackerman, *Guide to the Exhibition of Persian Art,* The Iranian Institute, New York, 1940, p.240, no.32
I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à la fin des Safavis,* Paris, 1964, pp.55-6
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.148-151.
A. Welch, *Calligraphy in the Arts of the Muslim World*, New York and Austin, 1979, no.63, pp.152-3
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.35, pp.110-11
D. James, "Islamic Calligraphy: An Outline", in *Islamic Calligraphy*, exhibition catalogue, Geneva, 1988, fig.1,p.15
M-A. Karimzadeh Tabrizi, *The Lives and Art of the Old Painters of Iran*, London, 1991, vol.3, p.1065, illustrated no.22, p.1508
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins,* London, 1998, no.52, pp.78-9
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.52, pp.78-9
A. Welch, "Worldly and Otherwordly Love in Safavi painting", in R. Hillenbrand (ed.), *Persian Paintings from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson*, London, 2000, pp. 303, 309, fig.9
A. Adamova, "Muhammad Qasim and the Isfahan School of Painting", in A. Newman (ed.), *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East, Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period*, Leiden, 2003, pp.204-05.
A.S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran safavide 1501-1736,* Paris, 2007, no. 146, pp.390-1
B.W. Robinson and E. Sims, *The Windsor Shahnama of 1648,* London, 2007, p. 205, fig.2
O. Grabar, *Masterpieces of Islamic Art, the Decorated Page from the 8th to the 17th century,* Munich, 2009, p.219
O. Grabar, *Images en terres d' Islam,* Paris, 2009, p.219

INSCRIPTIONS:
The poem which the youth is holding reads, 'May the world fulfil your wishes from three lips; The lips of the beloved, the lips of a stream, and the lips of a [wine] cup; Oh God! May you remain in this world so long that you trace 'God is Greatest' in the dust of the firmament | The humblest of slaves who utters prayers, Muhammad Qasim the painter"



This is a highly significant and exquisitely elegant portrait by Muhammad Qasim, one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 17th century, and may represent an idealised self-portrait of this well-known painter-poet.

For many decades the figure in the painting was been described as an anonymous youth holding a poem and dated to circa 1650 (see list of publications above). Anthony Welch and Sheila Canby commented on the fact that the figure may be a visual representation of the poetic verses held in the youth's hands (A. Welch 1978, p.148; Canby 1998, p.79). Welch further commented that the poem uses established mystical metaphors as a panegyric for the painting's owner: "The metaphor of the 'three lips' is frequent in Iranian mystical poetry and equates the beauty of the beloved with the beauty of the garden stream and with the beauty of the wine cup; the pious invocation at the top of the page underscores the two levels of meaning: longing for the earthly beloved is an intimation of the soul yearning for God" (Welch 2000, p.303). Welch further noted that Muhammad Qasim worked for Shah Abbas I, and suggested that in the invocation he was offering his obeisance both to God and to his royal patron (Welch and Welch 1982, p.110).

More recently, two scholars have reassessed the painting and have significantly changed our understanding of the portrait itself, the date and the artist. In 2003 Ada Adamova published an article in which she thoroughly reevaluated Muhammad Qasim's career and concluded that he was not a pupil of Reza Abbasi, as had previously been thought, but a contemporary, being born before 1575, beginning his career in the 1590s and continuing to the mid-17th century, dying in AH 1070/1659 AD (Adamova 2003). She traced the development of his style and concluded that he had a very significant influence on the development of Persian painting of the 17th century in parallel with Reza Abbasi, rather than as pupil or follower. She also discussed his importance as a poet, a previously somewhat overlooked aspect, noting his description as such by Vali Quli Shamlu, the latter who also mentioned that Muhammad Qasim wrote under the pen-name Isfahani (*Qisas al-khaqani*), see Farhad 1985, p.119, fn.4; Adamova 2003, p.197). Adamova re-dated the present work to the period 1605 to 1627 and suggested that the verses inscribed on the page held in the youth's hand were composed by Muhammad Qasim himself, pointing out that the words of the first couplet in the present painting appear again in another work by Muhammad Qasim, the well-known *Shah Abbas embracing his page* dated 1627, in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (MAO 494, see Makariou 2012, p.457).

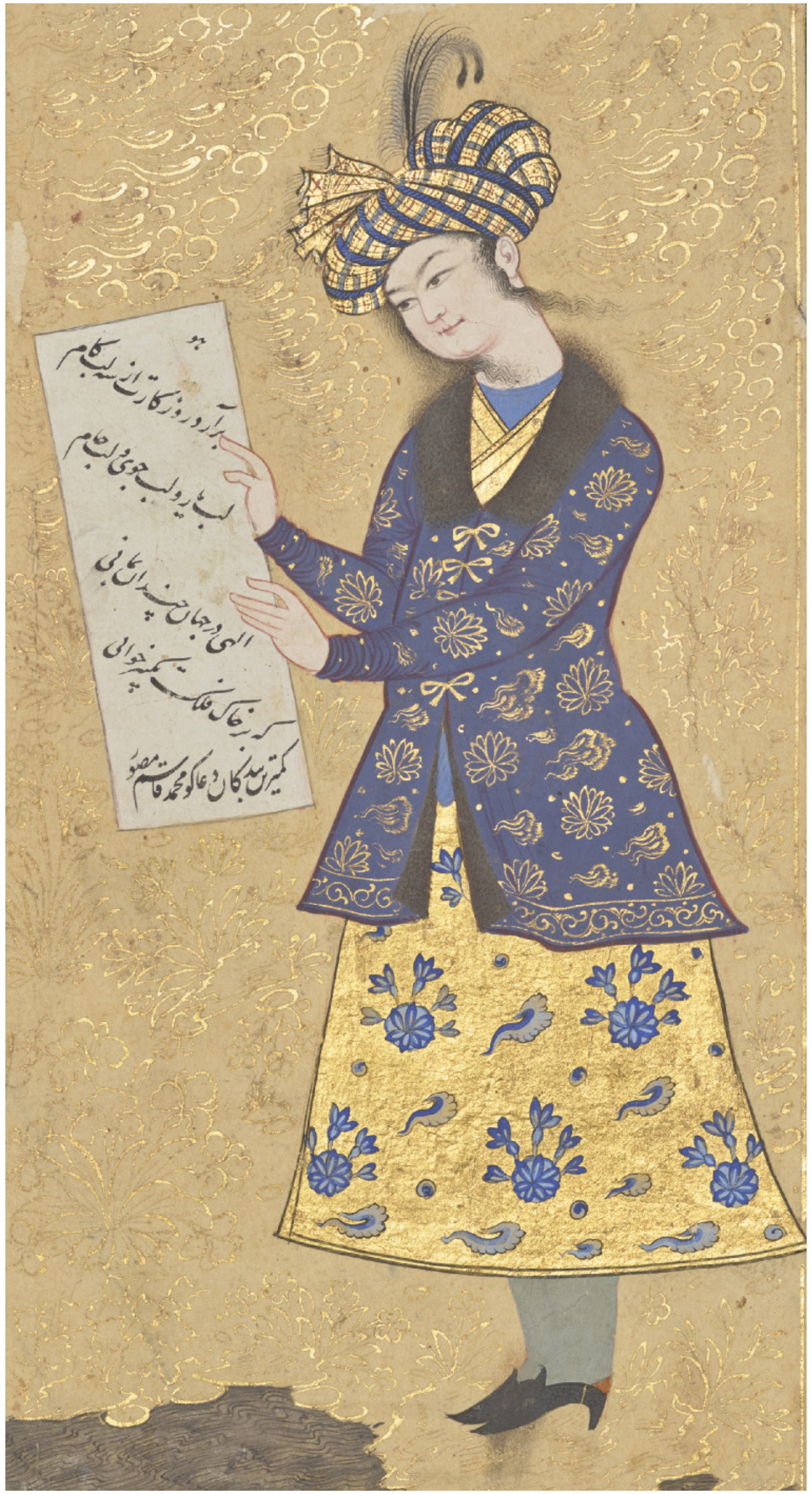
In 2007 the present painting was exhibited in *Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran Safavide, 1501-1736* at the Musée du Louvre, Paris. In the accompanying catalogue Souren Melikian-Chirvani argued firmly that the painting is in fact an idealised self-portrait of the artist, intended as the frontispiece of an album or *Divan* which would have had other works and possibly verses by Muhammad Qasim himself. Melikian-Chirvani stated that the wording of the Persian verses "leaves no doubt as to the painter's intention. This text begins with the Sufi invocation to God, contained in a single word, uttered like an exclamation: 'Him!' After which, the four lines of a quatrain are calligraphed in a beautiful script that also testifies to the master's training as a professional calligrapher. … These vows wish happiness and a long life to the recipient. The second verse expresses the hyperbolic wish that the recipient live so long that they will recite the prayer for the dead at the graves of the entire world." (Melikian-Chirvani 2007, p.390). He further stated that the particular formula used in the artist's signature refers both to his service at the royal court and to an invocation to God on behalf of the one to whom a petition is presented or to whom a literary work is dedicated. Thus, given Muhammad Qasim's status as a well-known poet as well as an artist, it was argued that in the present work his intention was to portray himself as both an artist and a poet, offering his own verses to the patron of the album and at the same time offering obeisance to the monarch and to God. Given the fine *nasta'liq* script in which the verses are written, one might add that he was also portraying himself as a calligrapher.

This new appreciation of the portrait, along with Adamova's re-dating to the first quarter of the 17th century, greatly enhances the already high significance of this painting and marks it out as a key work not only in Muhammad Qasim's oeuvre, but also in the history and development of Safavid painting in the first half of the 17th century.

Muhammad Qasim's superlative skills as an artist are fully evident in the present portrait. The lines are firm and use of colours balanced, creating a harmonious dialogue between the gold and rich dark blue pigments in the patterns of figure's garments and turban. The individual strands of hair are extremely delicately rendered, as are the barbs of the feather in the turban and the haze of fur on his collar, and the minute striations on the stream at the lower edge, which suggest a gently rippling surface.
The strands of hair by the figure's ears appear to be being blowing softly to the right, and combined with the suggested movement from left to right of the gold clouds in the background, this implies a gentle breeze wafting on the figure's face, subtly enlivening the serenely motionless figure.

Muhammad Qasim was probably from Tabriz (he signs himself on occasion with the *nisba* "Tabrizi"). According to Adamova, he established himself in the late 16th century and by the early 17th century was already developing an original style, some aspects of which were close to the work of his colleague Reza Abbasi, while others were markedly different (Adamova 2003). He seems to have lived to around the age of eighty-five and continued painting well into his later years, becoming, along with Mu'in Musavvir, the most important artist of mid-17th century Iran. He worked in Qazvin, Isfahan and Mashhad, and in addition to drawings and paintings of single figures and small groups destined for albums, he contributed illustrations to a number of manuscripts, including the well-known Windsor *Shahnama* of 1648, commissioned by Qarajaghay Khan, governor of Mashhad under Shah Abbas II (see Robinson, Sims and Bayani 2007). He also painted several murals in the Chihil Sutun Palace in Isfahan. In addition to the publications cited above, a helpful summary of Muhammad Qasim's career can be found in Bloom and Blair 2009, vol.III, p.19.

The calligraphy on the verso of the present painting dates from an earlier period and has been included when the album folio was assembled. It is signed by a calligrapher called Ali al-Mashhadi and consists of a quotation in Arabic from the *Hadith* and states that it was copied for a certain Nur al-Din Ni'matullah at Qazvin in AH 971/1563-4 AD.



*82

A YOUNG WOMAN WITH A CAT

THE PAINTING ATTRIBUTABLE TO MUHAMMAD QASIM, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1590; THE CALLIGRAPHY BY MUHAMMAD REZA, SAFAVID IRAN, MID 17TH CENTURY

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within blue border, gold, blue and red rules, the ivory margins plain, reverse with Chaghatay Turkish poetry from the *Arba'in* of 'Ali Sher Nava'i, 4ll. of yellow and gold *nasta'liq* set diagonally on an illuminated blue panel, within a fragmentary Mughal ivory inner border with stencilled gold flowers pasted down onto a plain blue outer border, gold and blue rules, the margins plain with the Eastern Arabic numeral '42' added in red ink and an unidentified inscription in black ink in the upper margin, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5⅝ x 3¼in. (14.4 x 8.3cm.); calligraphy 5⅝ x 2¾in. (14.4 x 7cm.); folio 15½ x 9¾in. (39.5 x 24.9cm.)

£40,000-60,000
US$55,000-82,000
€47,000-69,000

PROVENANCE:

William Dent (1761-1833) or his brother John Dent, Bengal, India and England
By descent to Sir Annesley Wilkinson Robert Dent, C.B. (1895 -1983)
Sotheby's London, *An Interesting Collection of Oriental Miniatures, The Property of Sir A.W. Robert Dent*, 11 April 1972, lot 14

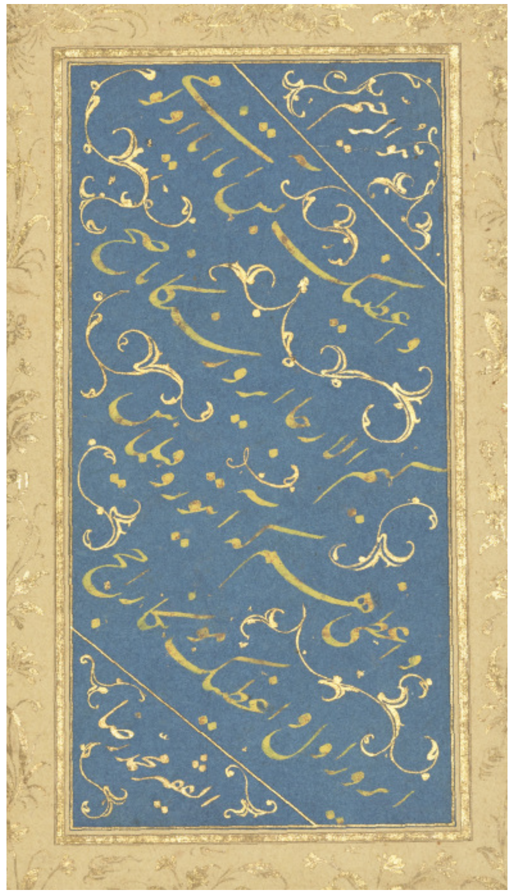
LITERATURE:

A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.114-117

This expressive composition takes as its subject a moment of tenderness between a Safavid lady and a cat. The animal wears a golden collar, suggesting that this is a pet. Though this is not a common subject for painters, the Italian traveller Pietro della Valle (1586-1652) records that he saw "a beautiful breed of cat" in Khorasan in 1620, and acquired four pairs to take back to Rome with him (Digard 2005). Colour depictions of idealised youthful figures against a plain background became popular in early 17th century Iran, with examples including two paintings from the Clive Album in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (acc.nos.IS.133:46/A-1964 and IS.133:28/A-1964). The colouration of this figure even more closely resembles a painting sold in these Rooms, 27 October 2022, lot 58, particularly in the rendering of the gold detailing on the clothes. The hands and face of both figures were outlined in a brownish-red ink to create a softer impression.

This figure seems to have been something of a type in contemporary portraiture. The pose of this figure - seated with legs bent, one upright and the other flat to the ground - can also be seen in a painting formerly in the Nasli M. Heermaneck Collection, now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (acc.no.M.73.5.458). In the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, there is an album which mainly contains similar single leaf portraits (acc.no.W.671). Of those, three are sat in the same pose with matching headdresses (ff.4a, 19a, 27b) and three are in the same pose with a fur hat (ff.5b, 27b, 30a). Though these women are depicted engaged in a variety of activities - including reading, pouring out wine into a cup, and contemplating a basket of fruit - in none of those images does a cat appear.

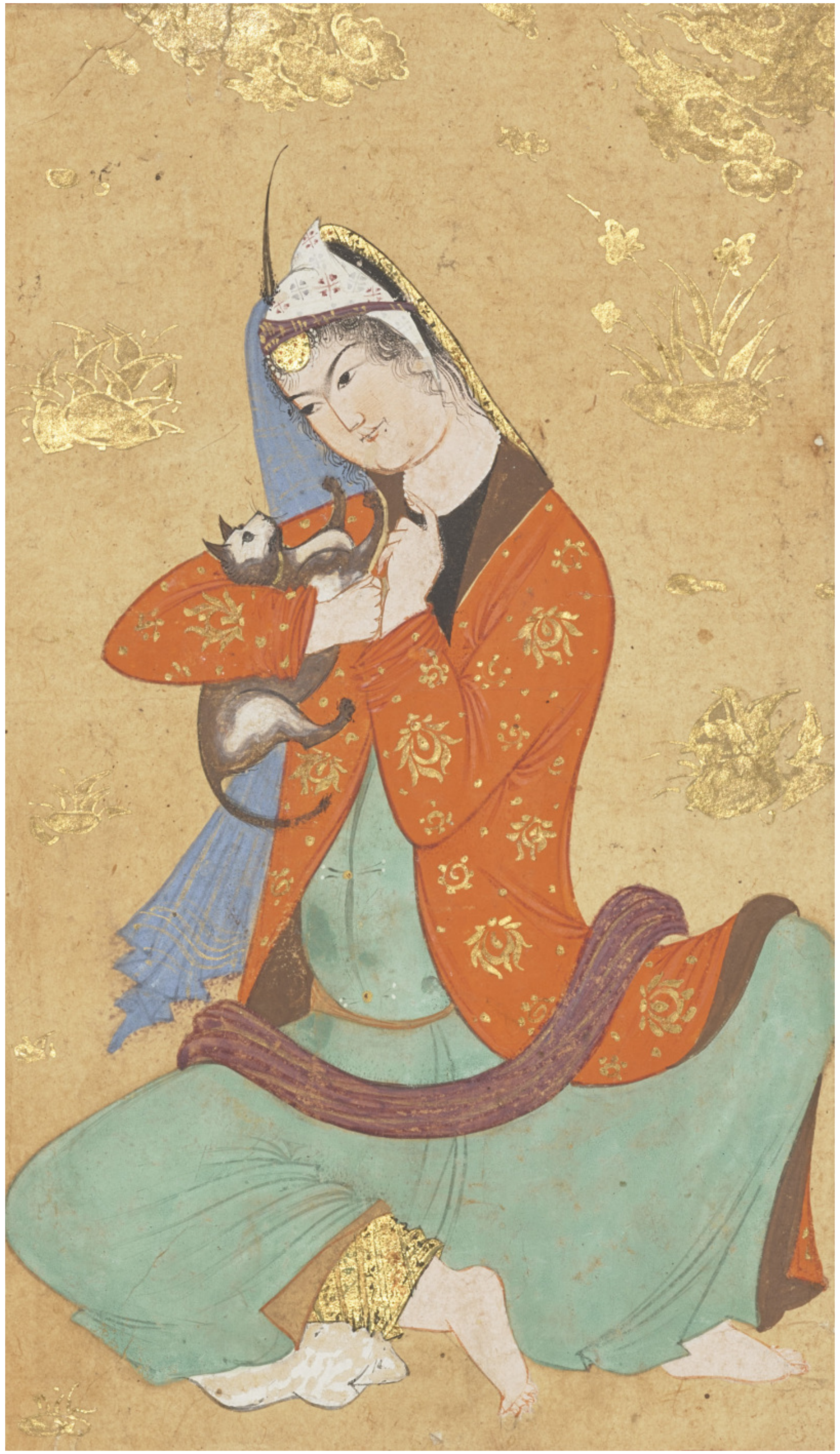
This painting is of a notably higher quality than those in the Baltimore album, and has a number of distinctive features: the sharply-defined angularity of the fingers, the small curve on the chin, and the delicate ringlets of hair falling down in front of the ears. In all these details, this figure is comparable to the reclining youth signed by Muhammad Qasim which sold in these Rooms, 25 October 2018, lot 103. Thanks to the work of Ada Adamova, and her re-reading of an inscription on a painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc.no.11.84.14), we now understand that Muhammad Qasim was a contemporary of Reza Abbasi and not a follower of his (Adamova 2003; see the note to the previous lot for further discussion). Thus, we understand that works such as the signed standing figures in the National Museum of Asian Art, Washington D.C. (acc.no.S1986.305) and in the Victoria and Albert (acc.no.MSL/1980/6964) were painted in the 1590s. Of these the latter has a face very similar to our figure.

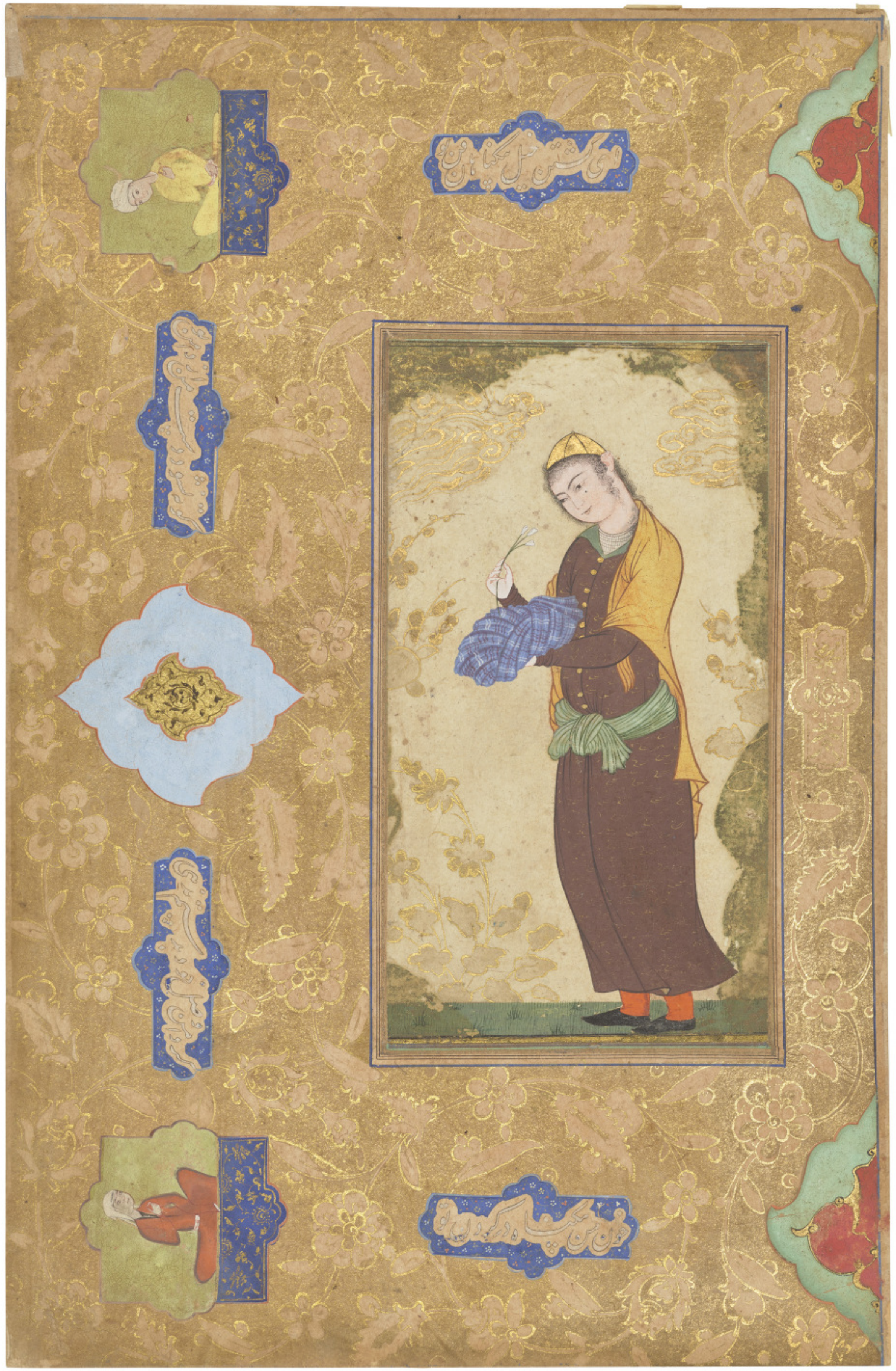


Reverse

The calligraphy to the verso is signed by a Muhammad Reza. This is probably Muhammad Riza Tabrizi, a pupil of Muhammad Husayn Tabrizi, and a contemporary of Imad al-Hasani. Mustafa Ali in the *Menakib-i Hünerveran* states that in 994 (1585-6) he went to Istanbul where he attracted the attention of the great men of the day, especially Mevlana Sa'deddin, and where his calligraphic works, which he produced only in small numbers, commanded a high price. One source states that he returned with great wealth to Tabriz where he died in 1037 (1627-8). Bayani records pieces by him dated between 978 (1570-1) and 993 (1585-6) (Bayani 1348 *sh.*, pp.726-8). The same verses are found on a calligraphic page copied by Imad al-Hasani (Kwiatkowski 2019, no.21, pp.80-81).

For more information on the Dent collection, from which this painting was acquired in 1972, see lot 23.





*83

A YOUTH PUTTING A FLOWER IN HIS TURBAN

ATTRIBUTED TO MUHAMMAD QASIM, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1600-40; THE BORDERS POSSIBLY BY MUHAMMAD AL-KATIB AND HASAN ALI AL-KATIB SAFAVID HERAT, CIRCA 1522

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, laid down within gold and polychrome rules, the salmon-pink margins with gold floral motifs reserved against gold sprinkled ground, blue illuminated cartouches containing white *nasta'liq* alternated with coloured palmettes around the edges, the upper and lower outer corners with seated figures, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 6 x 3¼in. (15.2 x 8.1cm.); folio 11½ x 7½in. (29.2 x 19cm.)

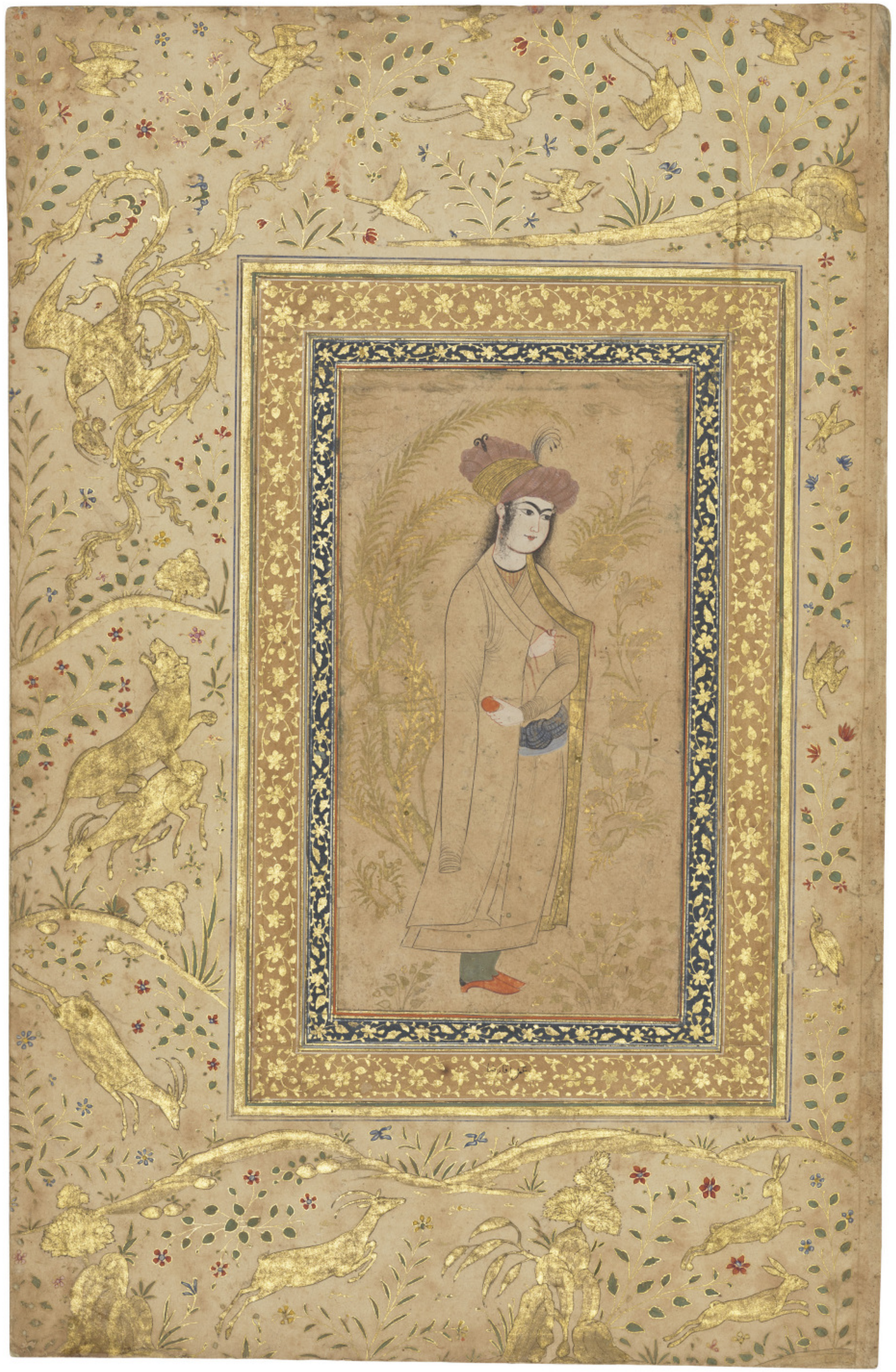
£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

PROVENANCE:
Christie's London, *Important Letters, Manuscripts and Drawings, Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 18 December 1968, lot 201

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.138-9

The elegant figure in the painting is typical of Muhammad Qasim's work. Among his earlier works, defined by Ada Adamova as those from the period from 1590 to 1605, are three signed or ascribed depictions of standing turbaned figures (Adamova 2003, p.200). Of these, she identifies the earliest as the painting in the Al-Sabah collection (acc. no. LNS 280 MS). However, it is the two slightly later figures on folios in the National Museum of Asian Art, Washington D.C. (S.1986.305) and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (acc.no.MSL/1980/6964) that are most similar to this painting. They have bulbous but unadorned turbans, knotted sashes around their waists, and subtly S-shaped silhouettes, as well as a plain background stencilled with gold flowers. Both also tip their heads forward in a manner reminiscent of our figure. The features of our figure, however, also closely resemble the page in the intimate painting of Shah Abbas in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (acc. no.MAO494) which according to Adamova ushered in a more mature phase in Muhammad Qasim's career between 1627 and 1648 (Adamova 2003, p.208). The more unconventional nature of this subject, showing the figure in a state of undress, may show the slightly greater confidence of an artist embarking on his later works. For further information on Muhammad Qasim see lots 81 and 82 in this sale.

The painting and the borders are likely to have been paired with one another at a later date. These distinctive borders are associated with manuscripts produced in Herat or Bukhara. In the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, are eight folios from two separate books in the *Haft Awrang* similarly decorated with calligraphy and seated figures (Arbery, Robinson, Blochet and Wilkinson 1962, cat.209 and 210). Four similar folios were published as part of the Vever collection, the text of these apparently from the *Makhzan al-Asrar* of Nizami's *Khamsa*. Of the Vever folios, two bore the name 'slave of the king, Duraq Ustajlu', probably the patron (Lowry and Beach 1990, nos.261-264, p.232). A further folio sold in these Rooms, 26 April 2012, lot 30, clarified when they had been made, since the margins were dated to AH 929/1522-3 AD, and were signed by a certain Muhammad Amin. Subsequent folios sold in these Rooms 28 October 2021, lot 27 and 27 October 2022, lot 43 added the names Muhammad al-Katib (possibly the same person as Muhammad Amin) and Hasan Ali al-Katib to the group of artists known to have worked on these folios. Of these folios, the squarer frames of the paintings in the corner are most similar to those on the *Subhat al-Ahrar* folios in Dublin (Arbery, Robinson, Blochet and Wilkinson 1962). It may be from this dispersed manuscript that these elegant margins originally came.



A FOLIO WITH BORDERS FROM A MUGHAL ROYAL ALBUM

*84

A YOUTH HOLDING AN ORANGE

THE PAINTING BY A FOLLOWER OF REZA ABBASI, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1630; THE BORDERS MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1640-58

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, set within orange and gold rules, laid down on navy blue and buff borders stencilled with gold, the outer border with apocryphal attribution, laid down on card, the cream margins finely decorated in gold and polychrome with animals and birds in landscapes, verso with 11ll. fine black *nasta'liq* arranged in two columns reserved against illuminated gold cloudbands, laid down on buff and dusty blue paper borders stencilled with gold, the cream margins finely decorated with small paintings of flowering plants, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7¼ x 3⅞in. (18.5 x 9.8cm.); calligraphy panel 7⅜ x 3⅞in.(18.6 x 9.8cm.); folio 15⅜ x 10in. (39 x 25.3cm.)

£70,000-100,000
US$96,000-140,000
€81,000-120,000

PROVENANCE:

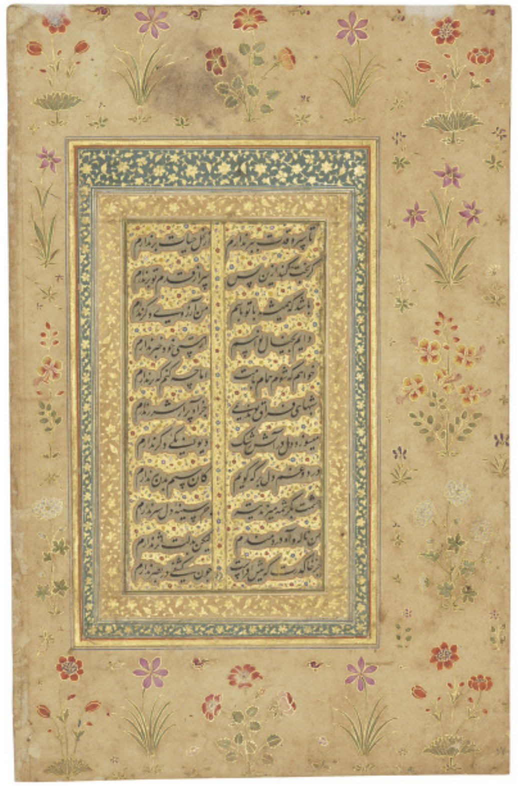
A.C. Ardeshir (1885-1960)
Sotheby's London, *Important Oriental Miniatures and a Mughal Manuscript, The Property of a Gentleman*, 10 July 1973, lot 5

LITERATURE:

A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. III, 1978, pp.134-7

INSCRIPTIONS:

Lower border with apocryphal attribution, *amal-i Aqa Reza,* 'Work of Aqa Reza'
The *ghazal* on the verso signed at the bottom of the intercolumnar division, *li-raqimihi,* 'By its calligrapher'



Reverse

The meticulously-drawn borders of this folio, which combine fine gold stencilling with colour pigment, indicate that they come from a Mughal Imperial album. This album was later owned by the businessman A. C. Ardeshir, a Parsi from Mumbai who assembled his collection in the 1920s and 1930s. Folios from this album were sold Sotheby's London, 10 July 1973, lots 1-6 and 8-41. Some of those folios are now in major institutions, such as three in the Museum Reitberg, Zurich (acc. nos.2015.105; 2021.418; RCD 7).

The floral borders on the calligraphic side of our folio closely resemble the borders on the Late Shah Jahan Album. Examples illustrated by Elaine Wright demonstrate an identical arrangement and proportion of flowers – with three skinny stems along the spine, and five running along the upper and lower margins – as well as the inclusion of Chinese-style red wispy clouds between the flowers (Wright 2008, pp.367-9, cat.55b). Though such floral borders are commonly encountered on Mughal albums like this, the margins of the recto are far more unusual. Only on two other folios – lots 6 and 35 in the 1973 sale – were the animals in the margin painted all in gold rather than in colour. The presence of a gold simurgh in the margin is very rare within such borders: their presence, together with the heavier use of gold, is reminiscent of the borders of the 1619 *Farhang-i Jahangiri,* for instance a folio in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. (acc. no.2019714646). A *Shahnama* prepared for Jahangir around 1610 was similarly decorated, with a folio in the Chester Beatty Library also featuring *simurgh* in the margin (acc.no.CBL In 11A.34.1a, published Wright 2008, cat.18). Such intertextuality, with 'references' to one album or manuscript appearing in another, is typical of the highly literate courtly milieu which these paintings inhabited.

The attribution of the painting to Reza Abbasi in the border below the painting is unlikely, with the painting not being in his usual style, and not being considered by Sheila Canby as one of his works. However, the painting does bear some resemblance to other Reza paintings: a painting dated to AH 995/1587 AD in the Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge MA, also shows a turbaned youth holding an orange in one hand and clutching his gown in the other (Canby 1996, cat.1). Another signed painting published in her book, in the collection of the Musée de Louvre shows a figure who holds a bottle and stands in an attitude more reminiscent of ours (Canby, 1996, cat. 110). Perhaps the closest parallel is found not in a single figure but a group scene, in which a similar young man stands deferentially to one side, also holding an orange or pomegranate in one hand (Canby, 1996, cat.55 left). Whoever left the note was correct to identify a composition reminiscent of Reza's work, even if this is not by his hand.

The calligraphy on the reverse is signed in the intercolumnar division *li-raqimihi* - 'by its calligrapher'. Mir Ali is known to have composed the text for many of his calligraphic compositions: several of the calligraphic folios in the Shah Jahan Album, for instance, were signed by Mir Ali in the capacity of a poet, not a calligrapher (Welch, 1987, figs.10, 12, 15, 19, 22).

THREE PAINTINGS BY THE ARTIST MU’IN MUSAVVIR

Mu‘in Musavvir was one of the greatest artist of Safavid Iran in the 17th century. His career spanned the majority of the century, beginning in the early 1630s and continuing to the 1690s. Born between 1610 and 1617, he lived into his eighties and, remarkably, was still painting in his final years. His last work is dated 1697 and he is thought to have died in 1698, or possibly 1707.

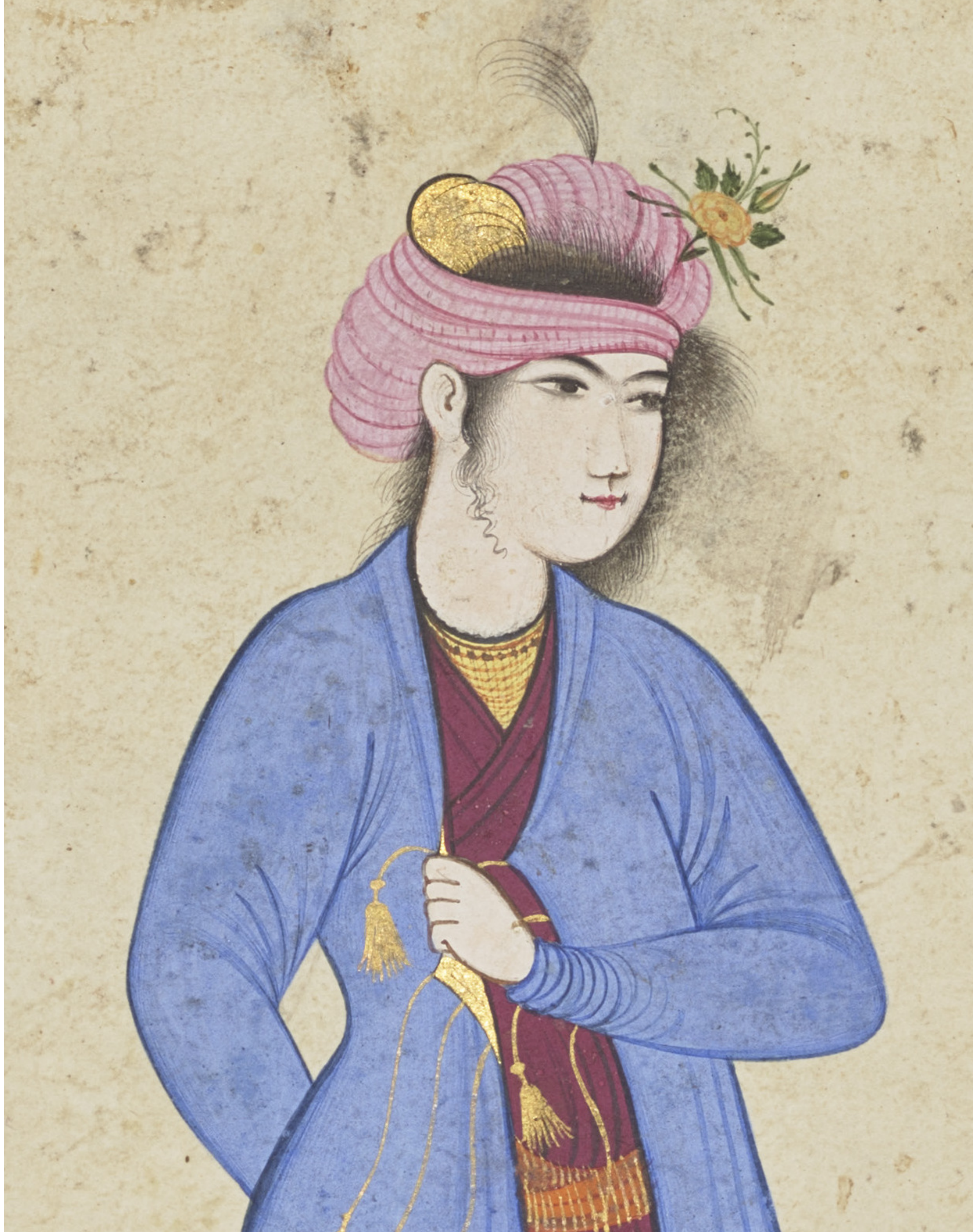
He was the best-known pupil of Reza Abbasi, the celebrated artist of Shah Abbas I (r. 1588-1629) (see lots 77 and 78 in this sale). In AH 1044/1635 AD, one month before Reza’s death, Mu‘in painted a portrait of his teacher (Princeton University Library, Garrett no. 96G, see Farhad 1990, fig.8, p.125), a composition he returned to forty years later in AH 1084/1673 AD, and again in a further version dated AH 1087/1676 AD (formerly in the Rockefeller Collection, sold Christie’s New York 10 May 2018, lot 1001). He signed the majority of his works, often adding lengthy inscriptions containing information on the context of production, including precise dates, who the work was made for, its place of production and sometimes a particular set of circumstances that occasioned its production, providing a level of detail unusual in Persian painting. Massumeh Farhad attributed this to a natural curiosity about the world that resulted in an almost journalistic recording of information (Farhad 1990). Lot 87 in this sale, the portrait of Hakim Shifa’i, is a case in point. In the inscription on that work Mu‘in provides a full signature and precise date, and informs us that “the picture was based on a version by the master Reza Abbasi [painted] in the year 1044” (1634-5 AD).

Mu‘in was a prolific artist and his long career gave him the opportunity to produce a large corpus of work. He codified the style developed by his teacher Reza, absorbing it and transforming it. Despite his great debt to his teacher, his style was distinctive, with soft, fluid lines and a lighter tone, and with a firm grounding in the calligraphic approach and the use of strong colours. He was more conservative than some of his contemporaries in the mid to late 17th century, who were experimenting with and absorbing artistic influences from Europe and India and producing a radically new style and aesthetic. In contrast, Mu‘in stayed true to his artistic roots and training in the early decades of the century, maintaining a relatively consistent style throughout his long career. He introduced an element of wit and comment into his works and moved with ease between paintings of court figures and documentary scenes of daily life. This combination of conservatism and innovation clearly served him well, as he remained a popular and sought-after artist right to the end of his life, producing significant numbers of works in his final decades.

He provided illustrations for a considerable number of manuscripts, probably produced for the elite members of the royal court (Farhad 1990, p.114). These included several profusely-illustrated copies of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi, as well as histories of Shah Isma‘il. In addition, a handful of illustrations to the works of Nizami survive.

He also produced many single-figure paintings and drawings, many destined for inclusion in albums (*muraqqa*), a format at which he excelled and for which he is perhaps best known. His focus on this type of painting increased considerably from the late 1640s onwards and the three works by Mu‘in in the present sale are superb examples of this aspect of his oeuvre.
In addition to Mu‘in’s 1676 portrait of Reza Abbasi mentioned above, other important works by Mu‘in have been sold in these rooms 22 April 1981, lot 120, and Christie’s New York 10 May 2018, lot 1009 (also from the Rockefeller Collection); and at Sotheby’s London 15 October 1998, lot 65, and 9 April 2008, lot 54.

For further discussion of Mu‘in Musavvir and illustrations of his work see: Stchoukine 1964, pp.216-7, 225-6; Welch and Welch 1982, pp. 120-127; Farhad 1990; Soudavar 1992, pp.263-4, 288-91; Canby 1993, pp.110-113; Canby 1998, pp.82-89; Canby 1999, as indexed; Eng 2016 (where a partial list of works is given).



*85

A YOUTH IN EUROPEAN COSTUME CARRYING A CERAMIC VESSEL

SIGNED BY MU'IN MUSAVVIR, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, DATED JUMADA I AH 1084/AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1673 AD

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, signed lower right, gold rules, pasted down onto pale pinkish paper borders and plain paper margins, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 3⅝in. (19 x 9.2cm.); folio 10⅝ x 6¼in. (27 x 16cm.)

£80,000-120,000
US$110,000-160,000
€93,000-140,000

PROVENANCE:

The Property of Lady Birley
Christie, Manson and Woods, London, 13 July 1956, lot 178
Private English Collection, before 1981
Christie's London, *Important Islamic and Indian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, 23 April 1981, lot 121
Eyre and Hobhouse Ltd, London, 1981

EXHIBITED:

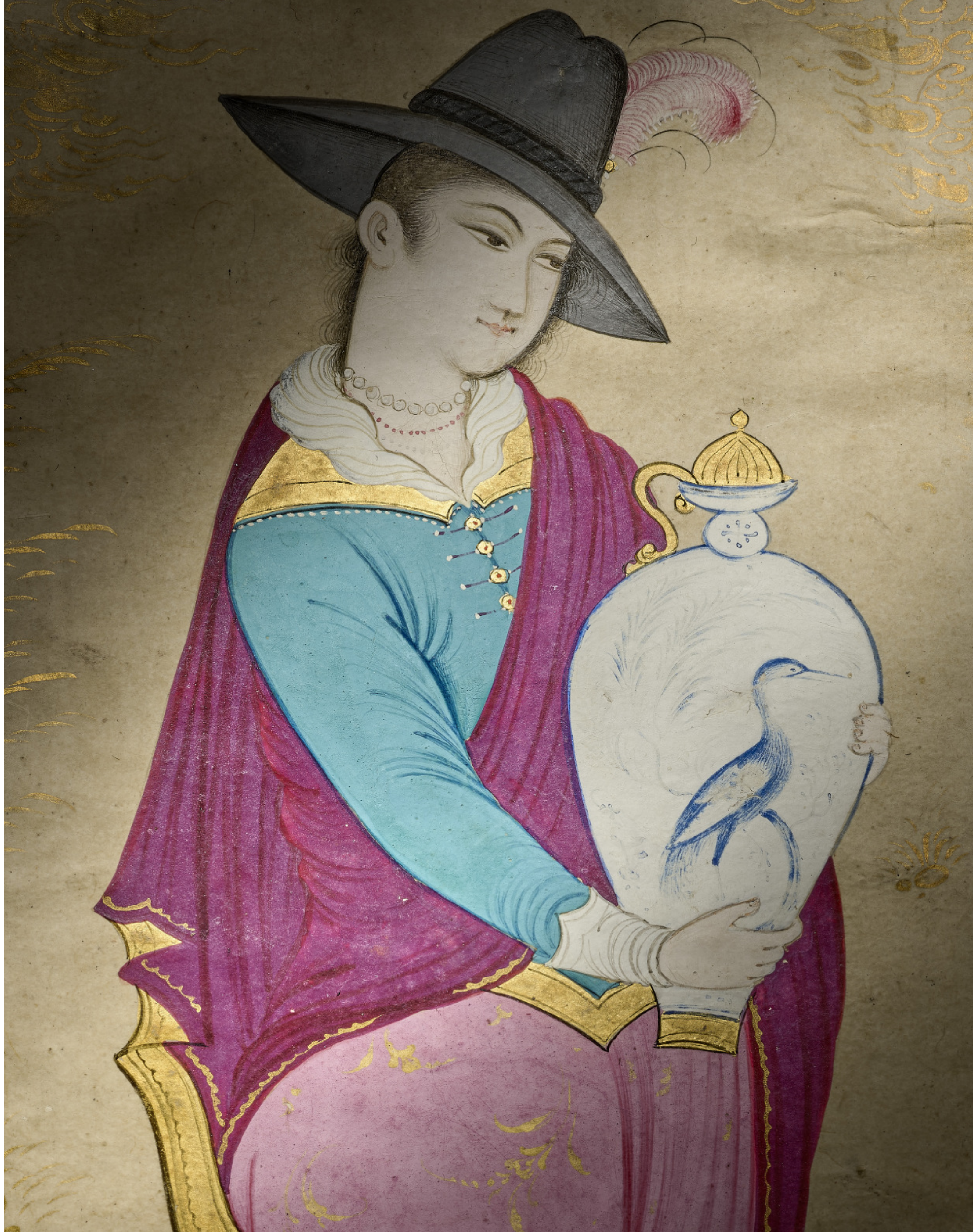
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Royal Persian Painting: The Qajar Epoch, 1785-1925, Brooklyn Museum of Art; Armand Hammer Museum at University of California, Los Angeles; Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1998-9

LITERATURE:

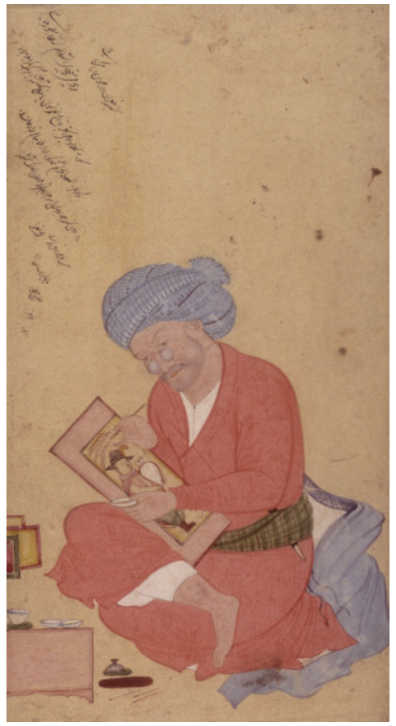
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.40, pp.122-4
M-A. Karimzadeh Tabrizi, *The Lives and Art of the Old Painters of Iran,* London, 1991, vol.3, p.1,528
R. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, London, 2nd edition, 2021, p.254, fig.190

INSCRIPTIONS:

'It was completed in the month of Jumada I 1084 for the *muraqqa'* drawn by Mu'in Muavvir'



In addition to the hammer price, a Buyer's Premium (plus VAT) is payable. Other taxes and/or an Artist Resale Royalty fee are also payable if the lot has a tax or λ symbol. Check Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of this catalogue.



Portrait of Reza Abbasi by Mu'in Musavvir, Safavid Isfahan, 1673 © Princeton University

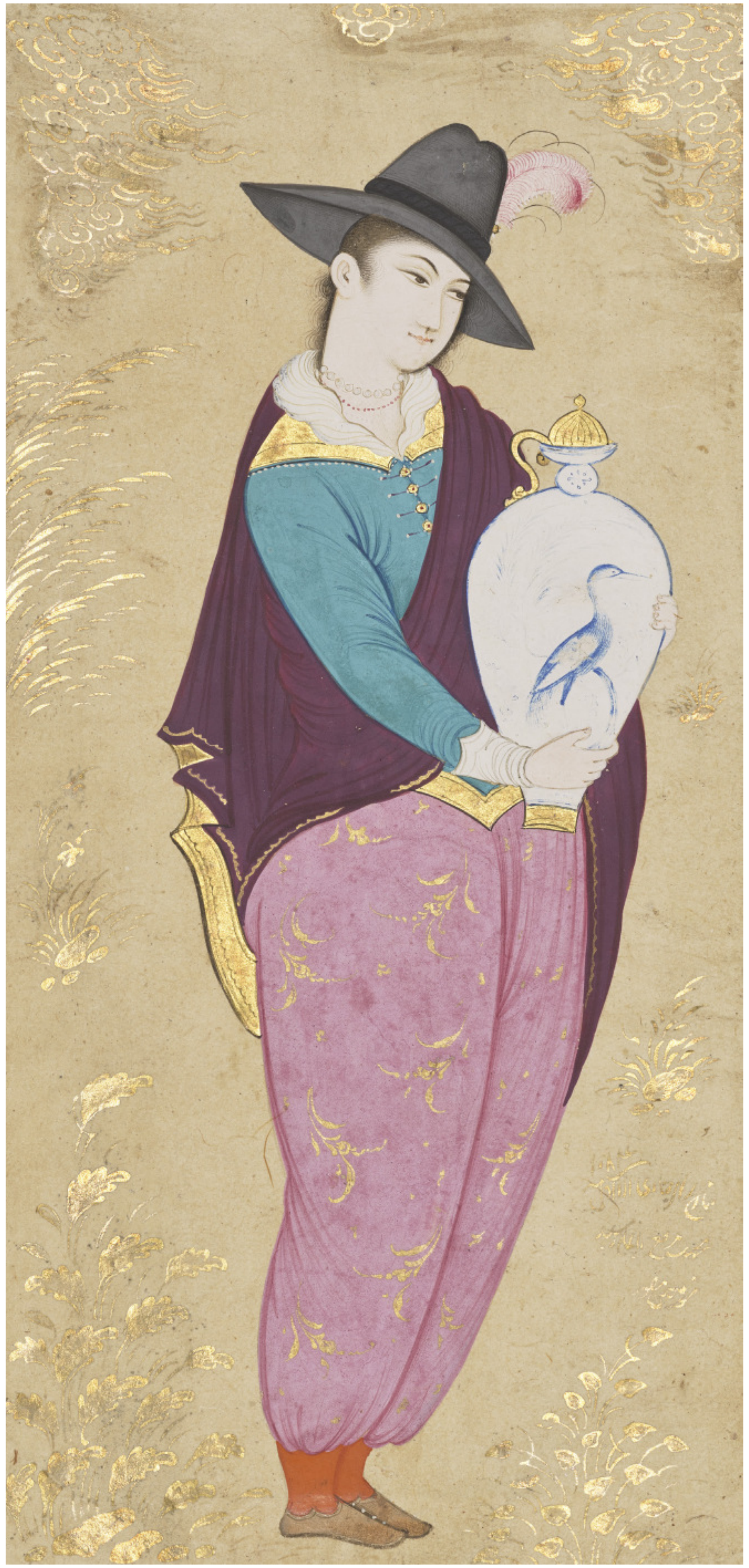
This outstanding example of Mu'in Musavvir's work is highly significant for its documentary and aesthetic value. Through its relation to a portrait of Reza Abbasi painted by Mu'in, it demonstrates the importance of the master-pupil relationship between two of the most renowned Persian painters of the Safavid era and reveals interesting aspects of what might be termed Mu'in's artistic nostalgia.

Mu'in was in the frequent habit of visually referencing works by his master and producing his own versions of Reza's compositions, often more than once. A well-known portrait by Mu'in of Reza Abbasi has an inscription stating that the likeness was painted in Shawwal AH 1044/March-April 1635 AD (Princeton University Library, Garrett no. 96G, see the illustration here). This was near the beginning of Mu'in's career at a time when he was still under the guidance of Reza Abbasi and one month before the latter's death. The Princeton portrait shows Reza sitting cross-legged on ground in the process of painting a picture of a standing youth in a European hat and costume who holds a large ceramic vessel. The Princeton painting bears two dates, Shawwal AH 1044/March-April 1635 AD and Jumada I AH 1084/mid August-mid September 1673 AD. The inscription is lengthy and provides interesting information that can be interpreted in two ways. It states either that the portrait was painted in 1044/1635 and then "completed" forty years later in AH 1084/1673 AD (see, inter alia, Welch and Welch 1982, pp.123-4), or that it was painted in AH 1044/1635 AD and then "copied" forty years later in AH 1084/1673 AD (Farhad 1990, pp.120, 124-5, fig.8; Soudavar 1992, pp.263-4).

Either way, the crucial and fascinating aspect in relation to present work is that the tiny figure which Reza is depicted as drawing in the 1635 portrait is essentially identical to the figure of the youth in European costume depicted by Mu'in in the present painting; i.e. ours is effectively a full-scale version of the painting that Reza was working on at the time the portrait was taken in 1635. It is worth noting that the present work is dated just four months before the second date on the Princeton portrait. Thus, in producing the present painting and completing (or copying) the 1635 Princeton portrait, Mu'in re-engaged with this artistic memory of his teacher on two occasions within the space of a few months in 1673. In painting this full scale version of the minute secondary picture embedded in the 1635 portrait, Mu'in produced an almost Pygmalion-like tribute to his master. The two works together thus represent a fascinating artistic and emotional response by Mu'in to his teacher, a response tinged with nostalgia and veneration.

The details of the present painting are worth examining. Although it shows a figure in European garments, the face is Persian and a prime example of a courtly Safavid youth of the type described by Canby as hopelessly romantic, gazing into the distance lost in thoughts of his absent beloved. The European garments are of a Portuguese type and reflect a changing world in 17th century Isfahan in which increasing numbers of European merchants and diplomats arrived in Iran wearing *farangi* garments and introducing new imagery (for an essay on this, see Langer 2013, pp.170-237). Reza painted several works late in his career depicting figures wearing similar European garments (see, e.g. Canby 1996, cats.127, 128, pp.172, 175; Langer 2013, figs.66-71, 79, pp.172-4, 187) and Mu'in also painted other works in which the figures wear similar Portuguese garments and hats (e.g. Khalili Collection, London, MSS.1001.1, dated c. 1648, see Rogers 2007, cat.238, p.214, Falk 1985, p.120; Portland Art Museum (formerly Binney Collection), 70.27.13, dated 1687, see Binney 1966, no.55; Topkapi Saray Museum, H2142, fol.15b; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 55.121.23, see Peck 2013, no.91A, p.255). The Portuguese were particularly active traders all over Asia and contemporary depictions of Portuguese merchants wearing similar distinctive garments are found in paintings produced in India and as far east as Indonesia and Japan (for Mughal examples see Stronge 2002, figs.105-06, p.139, Hurel 2010, p.73, no.38; Coomaraswamy 1929, pl.LXXV, no.128, and engravings of Portuguese residents in Goa, in van Linschoten's *Itinerario*, Amsterdam, 1594-1595; for the Indonesian example see an image of Portuguese merchants at Bantam in the travelogue of the Dutch trader Cornelius Houtman *Premier livre de l'histoire de la navigation aux Indes orientales par les Hollandois*, Amsterdam, 1609, p.32, for Japanese examples see Namban folding screens in the National Museum of Portuguese Art, Lisbon, Inv. 1638-1639 MOV, 1640-1641 MOV, Oriental Museum, Lisbon and the Soares dos Reis National Museum, Oporto).

The large white ceramic vessel in the youth's arms is also notable. The design shows a Sarus crane standing before a curving tree, and the vessel has a small gold handle, lid and band around the base. It clearly represents a blue-and-white porcelain vessel of Chinese inspiration. Chinese ceramics, especially blue-and-white wares, had been popular in Iran for centuries and in the Safavid period this intensified. Shah Abbas (r. 1588-1629) amassed a collection of over 1,000 pieces of porcelain of the Yuan and Ming dynasties, which he donated to the Ardebil Shrine in 1607-08 (see Canby 2009, pp.116-159), and Chinese potters produced large quantities for export, known as Kraak wares. In response to this, Persian potters produced their own versions, similar in style, to supply the demand (for a discussion of this see, *inter alia*, Crowe 2002). In the present case, the specific shape, narrow neck and mouth (the *meiping* type), the rather plain design and the image of a sarus crane all point to a Chinese rather than Persian origin for the vessel depicted (for Yuan and Ming examples from the Ardebil Shrine donation see Canby 2009, pp.142, 151, 153, see also late Ming examples sold in these Rooms 9 December 2020, lot 91, 22 November 2006, lot 282). This further underlines the references in the present work to the cosmopolitanism of Safavid Isfahan in the 17th century, and similar vessels appear in other paintings, including a painting by Reza Abbasi of a European with a dog, dated 1634 (the same year as the original portrait by Mu'in of Reza) and in murals in the Chihil Sutun Palace.



*86

A YOUTH IN A PINK TURBAN

SIGNED BY MU'IN MUSAVVIR, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, CIRCA 1660

Ink and opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, signed to lower right, laid down on light pink borders sprinkled with gold, gold and polychrome rules, the ivory inner and outer margins sprinkled with gold, pasted onto card, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5¼ x 2in. (13.3 x 5cm.); folio 14½ x 9½in. (36.9 x 24.1cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:
Adrienne Minassian, New York, 1962

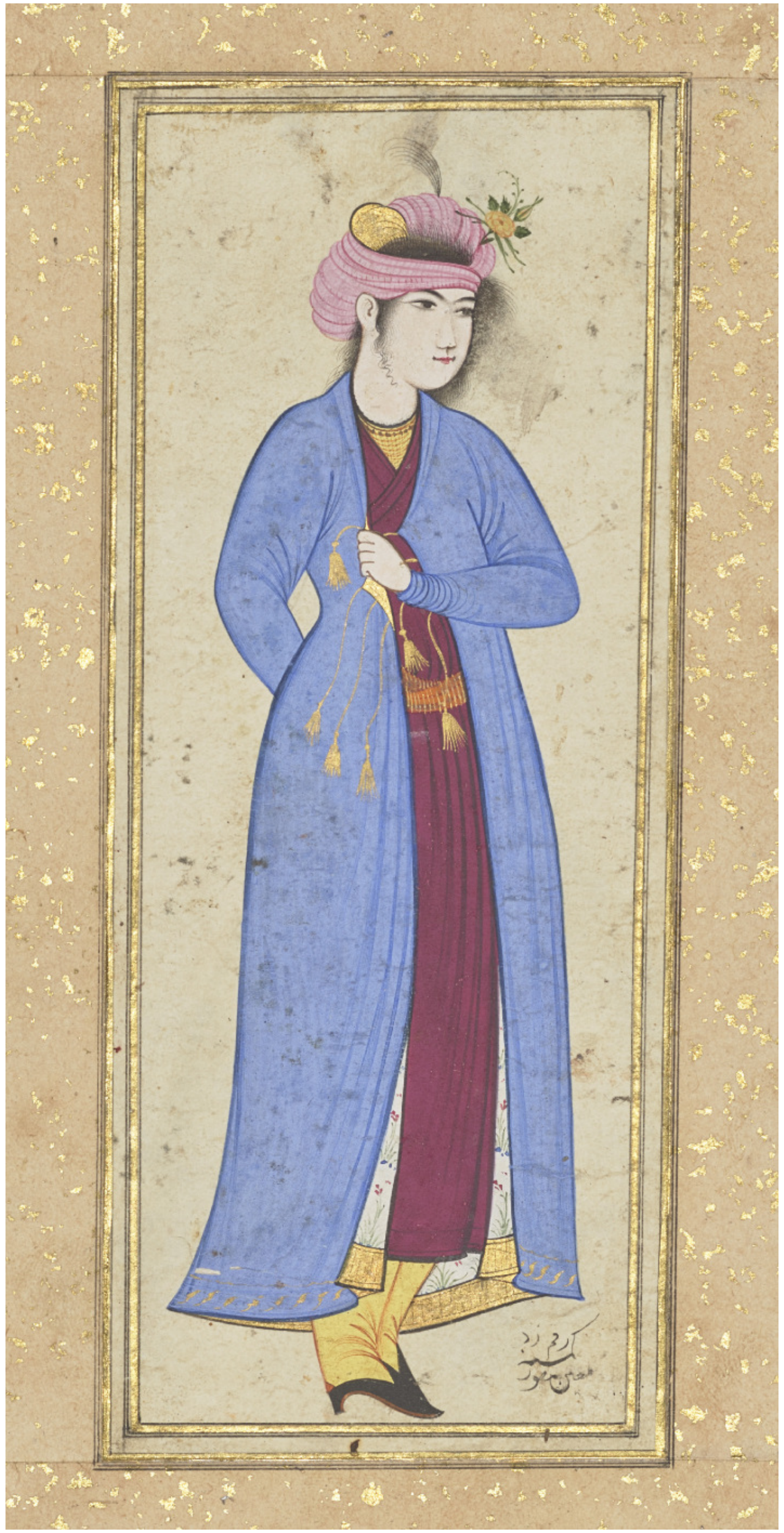
EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3. *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol. I, 1972, pp.214-5
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Ithaca, 1982, no.39, pp.120-2
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.56, pp.84-5
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.56, pp.84-5
R. Eng, "MO'IN-E MOSAVVER", *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* online edition, 2016, painting no.3

INSCRIPTIONS:
'Drawing by the humblest Mu'in Musavvir'

This portrait of an elegant youth is a fine example of Mu‘in's work, perfectly expressing several characteristics of his distinctive style. The long, curving lines of the blue coat and the superbly drawn folds of the pink turban show his strong command of the calligraphic approach learnt from his master Reza Abbasi, while at the same time revealing the softer lines mentioned by Canby (1998, p.83). He uses areas of strong, pure colour very effectively, in this case, the dominant blue of the coat, balanced with the maroon of the robe beneath, the yellow of the trousers, the creamy white of the face and the pink of the turban. He is also a master of detail: the folds of the turban are neatly parallel and there are small transverse lines indicating a patterning on the textile; the yellow flower is detailed enough for us to recognise a rose; the individual strands of the feather and the figure's hair are delicately rendered, as are the flowers on the inner lining of the coat, which Canby suggests may be tulips, and the lining itself an imported Indian textile (Canby 1999, p.154)

Canby referred to this elegant youth as appearing hopelessly romantic, and commented that Safavid pictures of young men gazing into the distance are visually analogous to the mystical yearning for the absent loved one in Persian poetry (Canby 1998, pp.84-5). In this case the figure seems perhaps more knowing. His sense of fashion is clear from his elegant clothes, and yet his outer garments are quite plain and almost modest. However, a coquettish aspect is revealed in the flower and feather in his turban, his slightly raised left foot, and the gold brocade inner hem and fancy floral lining and of his blue coat, the latter displaying a further degree of fashion consciousness with its possible Indian origin. This combination of modesty and romance, traditionalism and awareness of cultural trends and fashion, and the skilful combination of calligraphic line, colour and detail, are the hallmarks of Mu‘in's style and are what made him such a respected and popular artist in his own time.



*87

PORTRAIT OF THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN HAKIM SHIFA'I

SIGNED BY MU'IN MUSAVVIR, SAFAVID ISFAHAN, IRAN, DATED 15 MUHARRAM AH 1085/21 APRIL 1674 AD

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the subject identified at top, signature and additional note to lower centre and lower left corner, laid down on intricate pricked gold and polychrome paper borders, laid down on orange card margin within gold outer rules, reverse plain with seal impression of Ibn Muhammad Ali Najaf-Quli, mounted
Painting 7¼ x 3⅞in. (18.4 x 9.8cm.); folio 12⅛ x 8¼in. (30.8 x 21cm.)

£25,000-35,000
US$34,000-48,000
€29,000-40,000

PROVENANCE:
Quaritch and Co, London, Sale Catalogue No.512, 1935
Hagop Kevorkian, New York, before 1962
Sotheby's London, *Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures, The Property of the Kevorkian Fund*, 7 April 1975, lot 53

EXHIBITED:
Arts of the Islamic Book, Asia Society, New York; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; Nelson-Atkins Gallery, Kansas City, 1982-3
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9
Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran safavide 1501-1736, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2007

LITERATURE:
T.W. Arnold, "Some unpublished Persian paintings of the Safavid Period", *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, no.135, July 1916, pl.1
Quaritch and Co., London, Sale Catalogue No.512, 1935
E. Kuhnel, "Der Maler Mu'in", *Pantheon*, vol.29, 1942, p.113
I. Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à la fin des Safavis*, Paris, 1964, pp.67-8
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol.III, 1978, pp.161-3
A. Welch and S.C. Welch, *Arts of the Islamic Book - The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Ithaca, 1982, no.41, pp.124-7
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins,* London, 1998, no.60, pp. 87-89
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins,* Geneva, 1999, no.60, pp. 87-89
A.S. Melikian-Chirvani, *Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran safavide 1501-1736*, Paris, 2007, no. 143, p. 385
K. Rendlova, "Portrait of Hakim Shafa'i from the Collections of the National Gallery in Prague in the Context of the Work of Riza-yi Abbasi, his Workshop and Epigones", *Bulletin of the National Gallery in Prague*, XXV, 2015, pp. 78-9, fig. 9
A. Soudavar, *Art of the Persian Courts,* New York, 1992, p.262, fig.39

INSCRIPTIONS:
The label to the top of the painting reads, 'Portrait of the Plato of the age Hakim Shafa'i'
The signature to the lower centre reads 'The picture was completed on 15 Muharram 1085, drawn by Mu'in Musavvir'
An additional note also in Mu'in's hand reads: 'The picture was based on a version by the master Reza Abbasi in the year 1044' (1634-5 AD)

This is an important portrait by Mu'in Musavvir of Shah Abbas's court poet and royal physician. Like lot 85, it clearly demonstrates the artist's remarkable interest in historical referencing through his paintings and his enduring urge to pay tribute to his teacher Reza Abbasi.

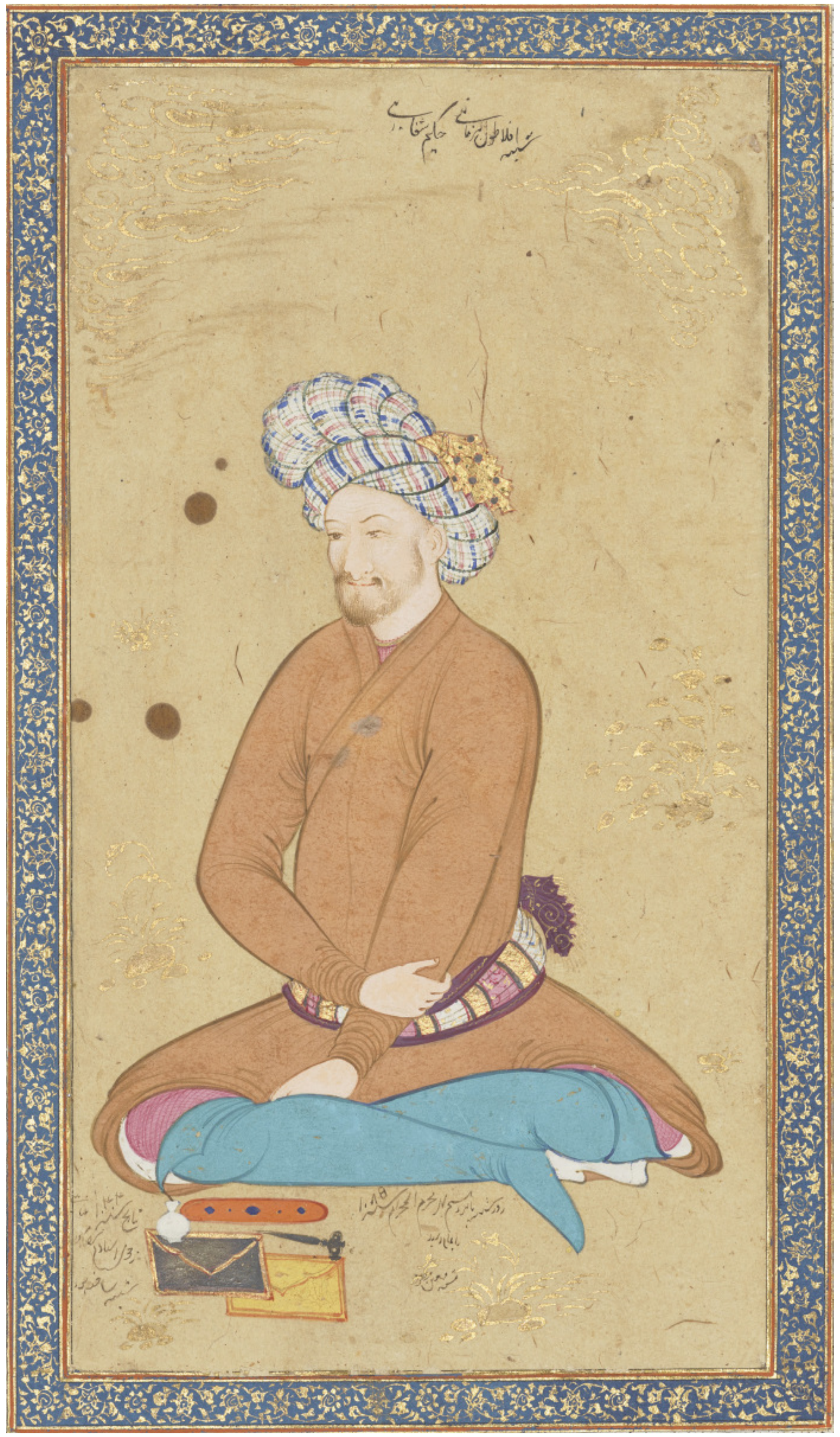
The portrait depicts a male figure with a distinctive face, sitting cross-legged, his right arm held across his body gripping his left arm in a somewhat unusual pose. In front of him are a pen-case, an inkwell, a pair of scribe's scissors and two closed manuscripts, all indicating a literary connection. There are three very informative inscriptions. The inscription directly below the figure's legs, in Mu'in's hand, gives the signature and date of 15 Muharram AH 1085/21 April 1674 AD. The inscription near the lower left edge, also in Mu'in's hand, states that the portrait was based on an original by Reza from AH 1044/1634-5 AD. At the top of the page is an inscription in a different hand stating that this is a portrait of the "Plato of the Age, Hakim Shifa'i".

Hakim Shifa'i was one of the royal physicians to Shah Abbas I (r.1588-1629 AD). According to the contemporary chronicler Iskandar Beg Munshi (quoted in Canby 1998, pp.88-89), he came from a medical family in Isfahan, was also a well-known and talented poet who was appointed poet laureate and was a favourite of Shah Abbas. He was mentioned by many contemporary and later historians and commentators, including Iskandar Beg Munshi, Sadiqi Beg and Reza Quli Khan. Most sources give his date of death as 5 Ramadan AH 1037/9 May 1628 AD (see de Bruijn, EI2, "SHIFA'I").

We know from several other examples that Mu'in was in the habit of painting his own versions of works by his master Reza Abbasi (see, for example, discussion of lot 85 in this sale, see also Rendlova 2015, figs.5-6). In the present case there are four possible candidates for the Reza original of Hakim Shifa'i that Mu'in refers to in the inscription, some of which have been discussed by scholars in the past (see Soudavar 1992, pp.262-4; Canby 1998, pp.87-8; Rendlova 2015). One is in the British Museum, 1920,0917,0.298.2. It is a fully coloured version and is inscribed with Reza's name but no date, but the authenticity of the signature has been question by Stchoukine and Titley, and rejected by Canby (1996, p.208, no.33). A second is in the Bibliothèque National, Paris Mss or. Suppl. Persan 1572, f.3). Francis Richards has read the mostly erased inscription as mentioning Reza and the date 1043 AH/1633-4 AD (Richard 1997, pp.207, 218, no.150). A third is in the National Gallery in Prague (inv. VM 1165) and bears the date AH 1038/1628-9 AD (see Rendlova 2015, figs.1-4). Rendlova suggested that the Prague version is the original by Reza referred to by Mu'in in the present work. However, it does not have a signature of Reza and the inscription is not in a hand typically found on Reza's accepted works, and furthermore the date (AH 1038/1628-29 AD) does not accord with the date of the Reza original referenced by Mu'in on the present painting. A fourth, heretofore unrecognised and unpublished version, is a drawing in one of the albums in the Topkapi Saray Library in Istanbul (TSK H. 2146). It bears an inscription naming Reza Abbasi and the date Rajab AH 1036/April-May 1627 AD. Like the Prague example, it was thus executed within the lifetime of the Hakim Shifa'i himself, although, like the Prague and Paris examples, the date does not accord with the date of the Reza original referenced by Mu'in on the present painting.

Close observation of these four works reveals that they appear closer to the style of followers of Reza rather than that of the master. Regarding the Paris example, despite the fact that one of the erased inscriptions appears to name Reza and the date of AH 1043/1632 AD, there is a further erased inscription below the figure's legs, where a date ending "87" is legible and a "1" is faintly visible, suggesting an additional date of 1087 (1676-7). The definitive original model for the present work thus remains as yet unidentified, and may well be lost. Nevertheless, this complex pictorial web involving Reza Abbasi, Mu'in Musavvir and these various iterations of the portrait of Hakim Shifa'i is an important and absorbing aspect of the rich tapestry of 17th century Persian painting.

A further notable aspect of the present work is that the borders are the same as those of the well-known Mu'in portrait of Reza in Princeton (Garrett no. 96G, see discussion of the Princeton painting in lot 85), and the two works were clearly part of the same album. Canby suggested that this may indicate that in the 1670s Mu'in was asked to prepare an album depicting famous figures from Shah Abbas's reign (Canby 1998, p.88). However, the borders are of 19th century origin, so although the two pictures must have been in the same album during the Qajar period, they were not necessarily part of the same album in the 17th century. However, they were probably part of the same collection in the early 20th century, because both the present work and the Princeton portrait were with the London bookseller Bernard Quaritch in 1935 (see Arnold 1935; Kuhnel 1942). The present painting was then purchased by Hagop Kevorkian, while the Princeton work was acquired by Robert Garrett, who donated it to his alma mater in 1942.



*88

STUDY OF A ROSE

SIGNED BY MUHAMAMD BAQIR, ZAND ISFAHAN OR SHIRAZ, IRAN, DATED AH 1178 / 1764-5 AD

Opaque pigments on paper, signed and dated to lower right, laid down within gold and polychrome rules and a navy border with gold flowering vine, laid down finely illuminated margins with a cobalt and gold cartouche at the top and spandrels in the upper corners, within a knotted polychrome outer border, laid down on card, reverse plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 7½ x 5in. (19.1 x 12.8cm.); folio 13¼ x 8¼in. (33.7 x 21cm.)

£15,000-25,000
US$21,000-34,000
€18,000-29,000

PROVENANCE:
Nouveau Drouot, Paris, *Art Islamique*, 23 June 1982, lot 20

EXHIBITED:
Treasures of Islam, Musée Rath, Geneva, 1985
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam*, Geneva and London, 1985, no.104, p.131
M-A. Karimzadeh Tabrizi, *The Lives and Art of the Old Painters of Iran*, London, 1990, vol.2, p.972
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.66, p.94
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.66, p.94
J. Bloom and S. Blair, *The Grove Dictionary of Islamic Art and Architecture*, Oxford, 2009, vol.III, p.16
L. Anvar, *Leyli et Majnûn de Jâmi, illustré par les miniatures d'Orient*, Paris, 2021, p.159

INSCRIPTIONS:
'Drawn by the lowest, Muhammad Baqir, the year 1178'

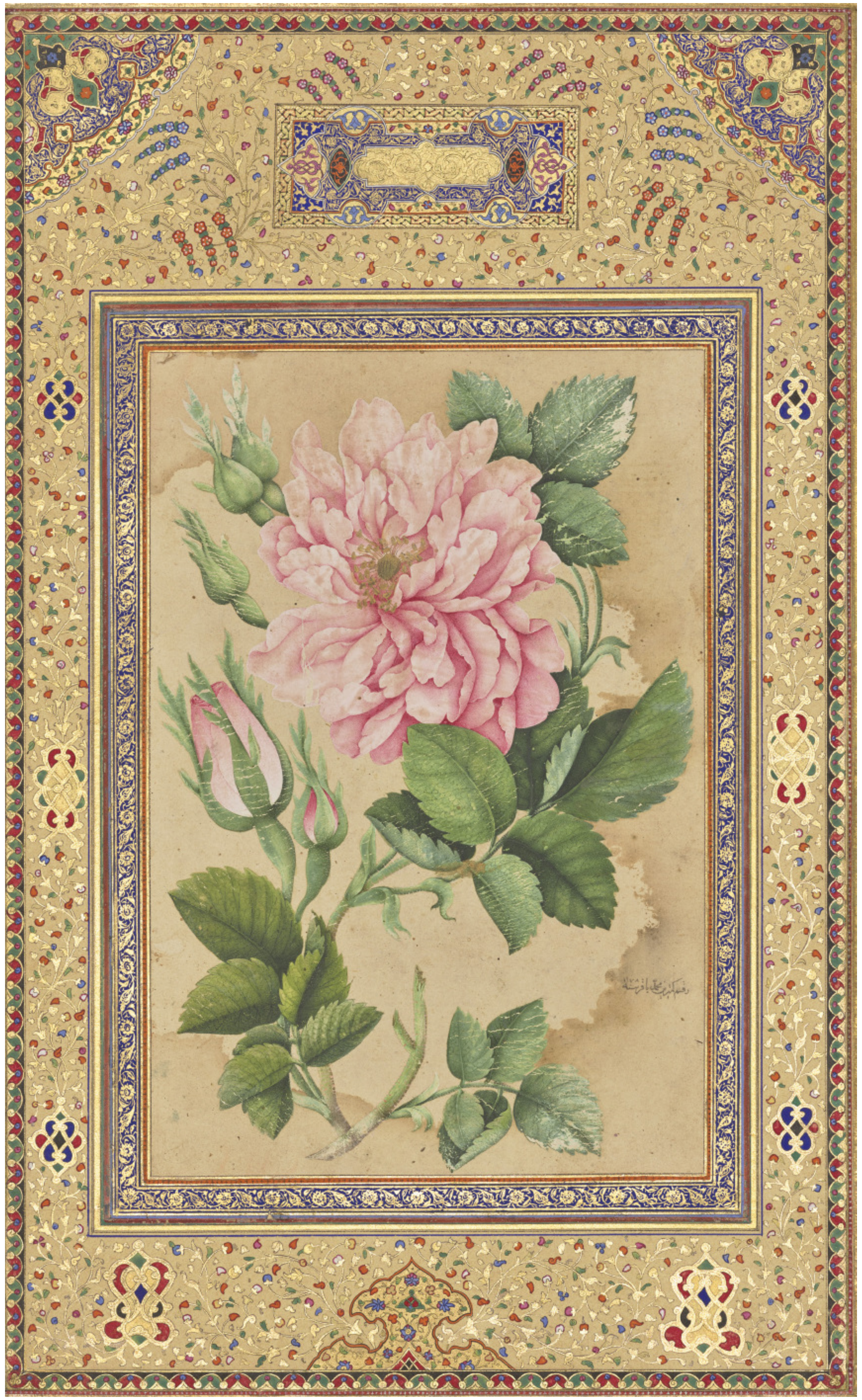
From the 17th century, the rose became an increasingly important motif in Persian art. The spectacular gardens around Safavid palaces, as well as the importance of rose petals and rosewater in Persian cuisine, increasingly found their reflections in art. An album in the British Museum contains a series of floral studies by the artist Shafi' Abbasi, depicting an impressive variety of flowers with meticulous detail (acc. no.1988,0423,0.1). The rose also began appearing extensively on textiles, such as a silk fragment which sold in these Rooms, 25 April 2024, lot 37. Artists also took their cue from European prints circulating in Iran. The Dutch traveller Cornelius de Bruyn wrote in 1704 that he saw an artist in Isfahan "very busy in copying, for the use of His Majesty, a book of the most curious flowers, which had been printed in Holland" (Le Bruyn 1759, p.308). Internal and external factors conspired to ensure that by the late 18th century the rose was a frequently-encountered motif in Persian art and decoration.

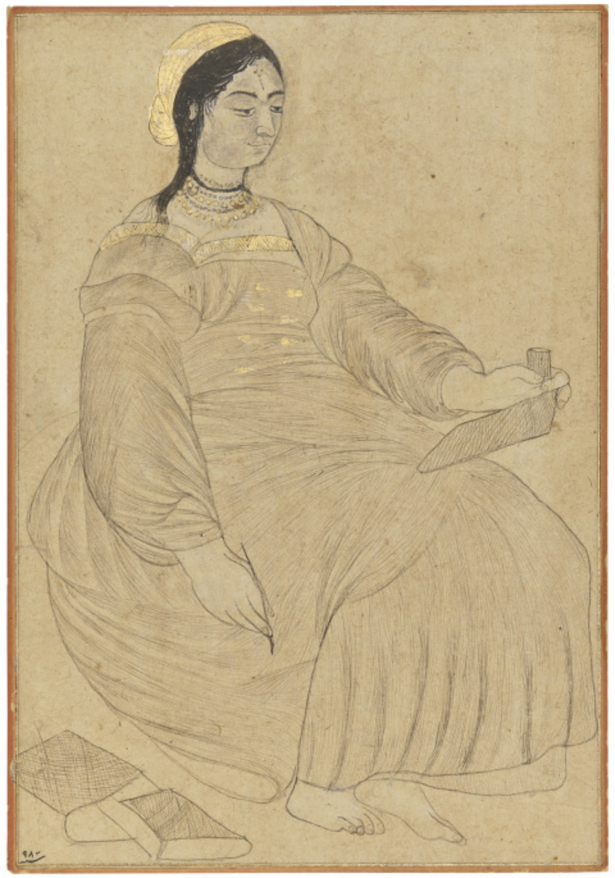
The artist of the present painting is Muhammad Baqir, who is considered among the preeminent Iranian artists of the 18th century. A pupil of Ali Ashraf, most of his works are dated to the mid to late 18th century. He was a major contributor to the monumental album known as the St. Petersburg Album, for which he painted many of the borders. For further information on this aspect of his career see lot 29. Throughout his career he enjoyed royal patronage: a portrait by him of Karim Khan Zand in the Museum of Art of Georgia, Tbilisi, is signed with the formula "the work of the humblest slave of the court". This indicates that the work was likely carried out for Karim Khan Zand himself (Adamova 1996, p.270). He then went on to work for the young prince Baba Khan Qajar, for whom he completed a lacquer book cover for a *Bustan* of Saadi. This must have been made between the years 1794 and 1797 when he was governor of Shiraz and before he was elevated to the throne as Fath Ali Shah (Adamova 1996, p.270).

This folio comes from a significant concertina album which was sold Nouveau Drouot, Paris, 23 June 1982, lot H. It included works by some of the most celebrated Mughal and Safavid artists, such as a painting of a *fakir* by Govardhan which later sold Sotheby's London, 25 October 2023, lot 47. Jean Soustiel believed the album to have been assembled and designed by Muhammad Baqir himself. Many of the margins feature flowers similar in style to the present lot: particularly striking are those on the upper margins of the painting of Judith and Holophernes by Muhammad Zaman (folio no.16), or the painting of Dara Shikoh talking with a sage by Govardhan (folio no.23). The latter of these has a signature indicating that the margins were decorated by Muhammad Baqir, and it is likely that he painted many of the floral margins through the manuscript. Though those are impressive, the greater space of a full-page illustration gives full rein to his artistic talents.

As mounted in the original album, our rose faced an almost-identical painting of a rose, also signed by Muhammad Baqir and dated to AH 1178/1764-5 AD. The juxtaposition of similar compositions is a feature seen through the album, often with earlier paintings placed next to later versions: for instance, the *fakir* mentioned above was originally facing a close copy by Ali Quli Jabbadar, dated AH 1068/1657-8 AD. Muhammad Baqir added identical margins to complete the illusion. This would have served to underline the skill of the copyist, inviting viewers to compare their work with the original. In this case, Muhammad Baqir plays a slightly different game with his audience, who may originally believe they are looking at works by two different artists. He even went so far as to sign one of the paintings in *naskh* and the other in *nasta'liq* to distinguish the two. A viewer would then notice differences between the two works, and on reading the signatures realise that these are in fact the work of the same hand. Nonetheless, the identical borders invite comparison between the two. The use of matching margins to connect facing folios in an album has a long history, and is seen in the Late Shah Jahan Album (Wright 2008, p.368). The borders on this and its facing folio, however, are more likely to date from the early 19th century when this album was rebound.

A connection can be drawn between this painting and Muhammad Baqir's lacquer work. In particular, a very fine mirror case in the Hermitage has on it a very fine plum-blossom stem against a plain ground (acc.no.VP-27). Like our painting, it is signed by Muhammad Baqir and dated to AH 1177/1763-4, only a year before our rose. It demonstrates a similarly obsessive care for detail, with the veins on the leaves and each individual sepal in the flower carefully separated from one another. Both the mirror-case and our painting also show a remarkable feel for textures, with the delicate folding of the petals contrasted with the firmer leaves. It should also be noted that a painting of a sleeping nymph in the Chester Beatty library is also dated to the same year as the present lot (acc.no.282.VI).





***89**

AN ALBUM PAGE

THE CALLIGRAPHY SIGNED BY SHAMS AL-DIN ALI AL-KATIB AL-FARSI, SAFAVID IRAN, DATED AH 992/1584 AD; THE PAINTING TURKEY OR IRAN, 19TH CENTURY

Ink and wash heightened with gold on paper, based on an engraving of the muse Clio by Hendrik Goltzius, dated AH 982 in the bottom left corner in black ink, set within narrow gold border, reverse marbled paper with black *naskh* and *muhaqqaq* arranged in four panels, signed and dated, cropped, within narrow gold borders, the calligraphy and painting laid down onto card, mounted
The painting 8¾ x 5⅞in. (22 x 15.2cm.); calligraphy panel 5 x 8¼in. (12.8 x 20.9cm.); folio 8⅞ x 6⅛in. (22.5 x 15.7cm.)

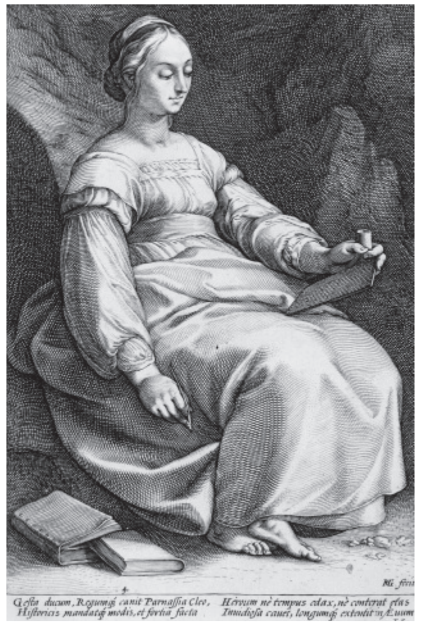
£6,000-8,000
US$8,200-11,000
€7,000-9,200

PROVENANCE:
F.R. Martin (1868-1933), Stockholm, before 1912
Probably Princess Andrée Aga Khan (1898-1976)

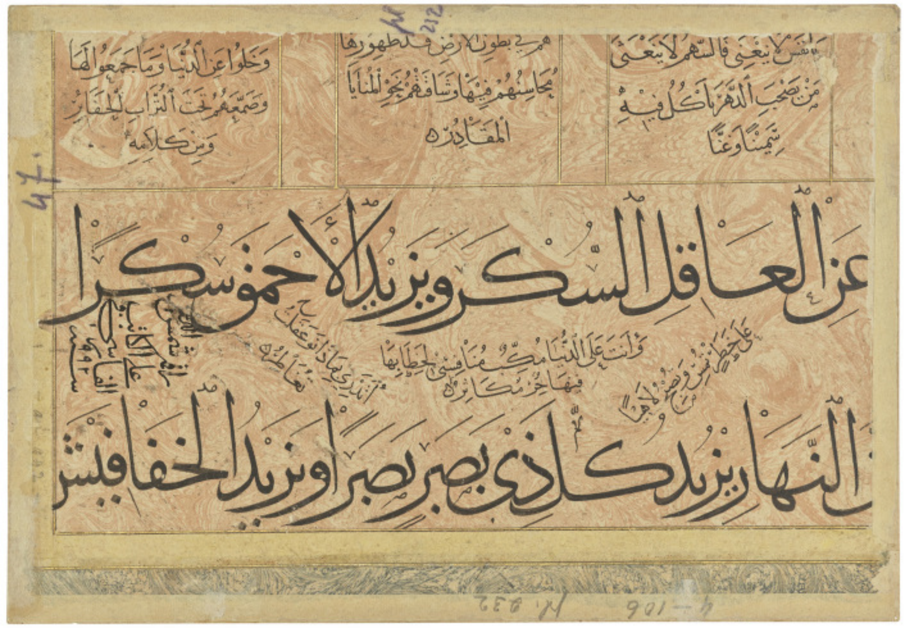
LITERATURE:
F.R. Martin, *The Miniature Painters and Paintings of Persia, India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th Century,* London, 1912, vol.1, p.93; illustrated, vol.2, pl.232

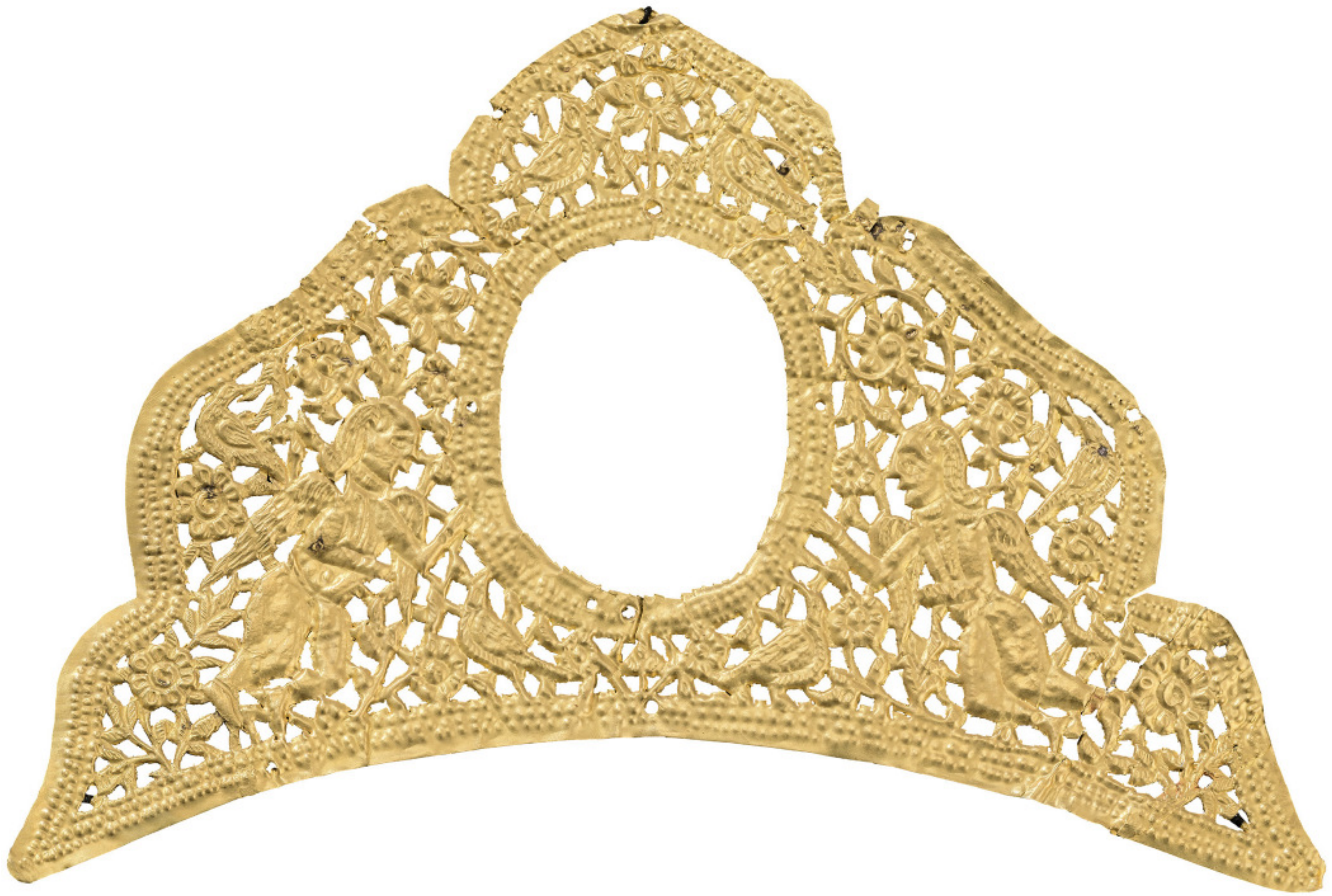
The figure in this painting takes direct inspiration from an engraving by Henrick Goltzius of Clio, the muse of history. Examples of the print include one in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (acc.no.M.88.91.271d) and another in the British Museum (acc.no.1854,0513.110). Goltzius' prints were very popular in Europe and beyond: his depictions of Titus Manlius Torquatus and Mucius Scaevola were amalgamated into one composition by Keshav Das. The resulting painting is in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (acc.no.RP-T-1993-33). F. R. Martin attributed this particular one to Ottoman Turkey, noting that Ottoman artists showed an equal interest in the copying of European engravings.

The marbling to the verso is of exquisite quality, and the calligraphy displays the Safavid predilection for combining *naskh* with large-scale *muhaqqaq* script. The name Shams al-Din Ali appears on the colophon of a *Kulliyat* of Sa'di in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (acc.no.Per 123). However, stylistic evidence suggests that that manuscript was completed around 1440, making it significantly earlier than the date on our signature. A similar combination of scripts, including some lines set diagonally, can be seen on an illuminated panel signed by Abd al-Baqi al-Tabrizi and dated to AH 1013/1604-5 AD, which sold in these Rooms, 21 October 2016, lot 220.



Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617), *Clio*. Los Angeles Museum County of Art, Mary Stansbury Ruiz Bequest, M.88.91.271.d





***90**

A GOLD OPENWORK DIADEM

IRAN, 17TH-19TH CENTURY

The thin golden body with openwork decoration depicting two affronted angels on a floral scrolling ground, the central oval aperture probably for a jewelled fitting, sewn onto black satin mount
3½ x 6⅛in. (9 x 15.7cm.)

£3,000-5,000
US$4,100-6,800
€3,500-5,800

PROVENANCE:
Probably Princess Andrée Aga Khan (1898-1976)

LITERATURE:
A. Welch, *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., (1972-1978), vol.II, 1972, pp.215, 217.

The form of this diadem resembles those which appear in paintings dating from the 17th century. Frequently women are depicted with a triangular object on their foreheads, tied at the back with textile straps. In some cases, as in the figural *cuerda seca* tile panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc.no.03.9c), the diadem seems to be made of fabric. However, in paintings such as one in the British Museum (acc.no.1977,0228,0.7), the details indicate that these diadems were sometimes made in gold. Further depictions of women wearing gold diadems are painted on the walls of the Chihil Sutun in Isfahan, such as in the central panel on the eastern wall. Fashions changed over the subsequent centuries, and by the Qajar period a diadem like this would have appeared deliberately archaic. The aureole in the middle may have been intended for a jewel, or possibly an enamelled portrait.

LOTS OF IRANIAN/PERSIAN ORIGIN
Some countries prohibit or restrict the purchase and/or import of Iranian-origin property. Bidders must familiarise themselves with any laws or shipping restrictions that apply to them before bidding on these lots. For example, the USA prohibits dealings in and import of Iranian-origin "works of conventional craftsmanship" (such as carpets, textiles, decorative objects, and scientific instruments) without an appropriate licence. Christie's has a general OFAC licence which, subject to compliance with certain conditions, would enable a buyer to import certain lots of this type into the USA. If you intend to use Christie's licence, please contact us for further information before you bid

***91**

A QUR'ANIC CALLIGRAM

COPIED BY MIRZA IBRAHIM ARDISTANI, QAJAR IRAN, DATED AH 1318/1900-01 AD

Ink and gold on thin parchment, the text comprising of verses from the Qur'an and pious phrases, depicting the Imam Ali, Hassan and Husayn accompanied by Salman Parsi and Qanbar in the likeness of Nur Ali, reverse plain
15½ x 10½in. (39.5 x 26.6cm.)

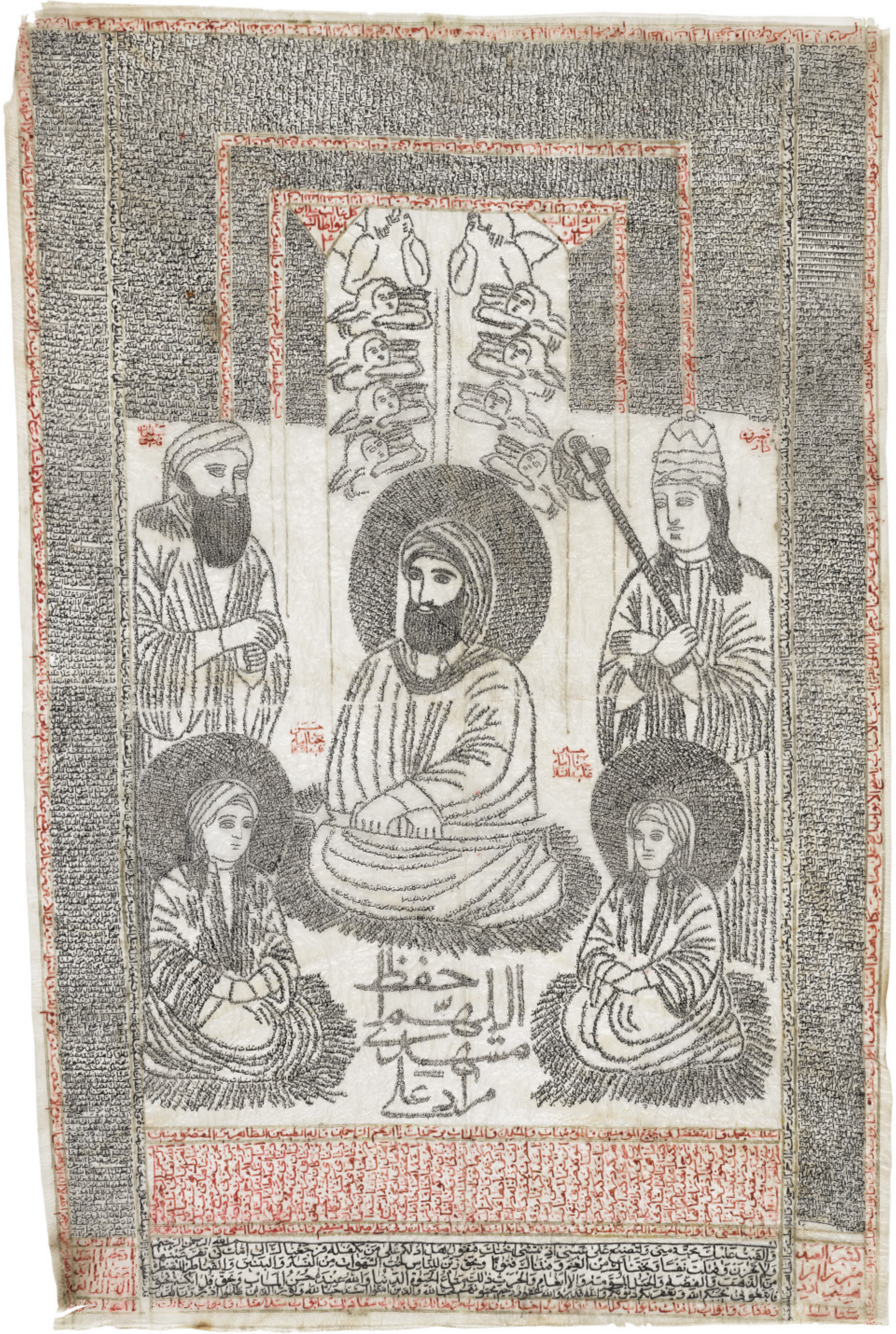
£10,000-15,000
US$14,000-20,000
€12,000-17,000

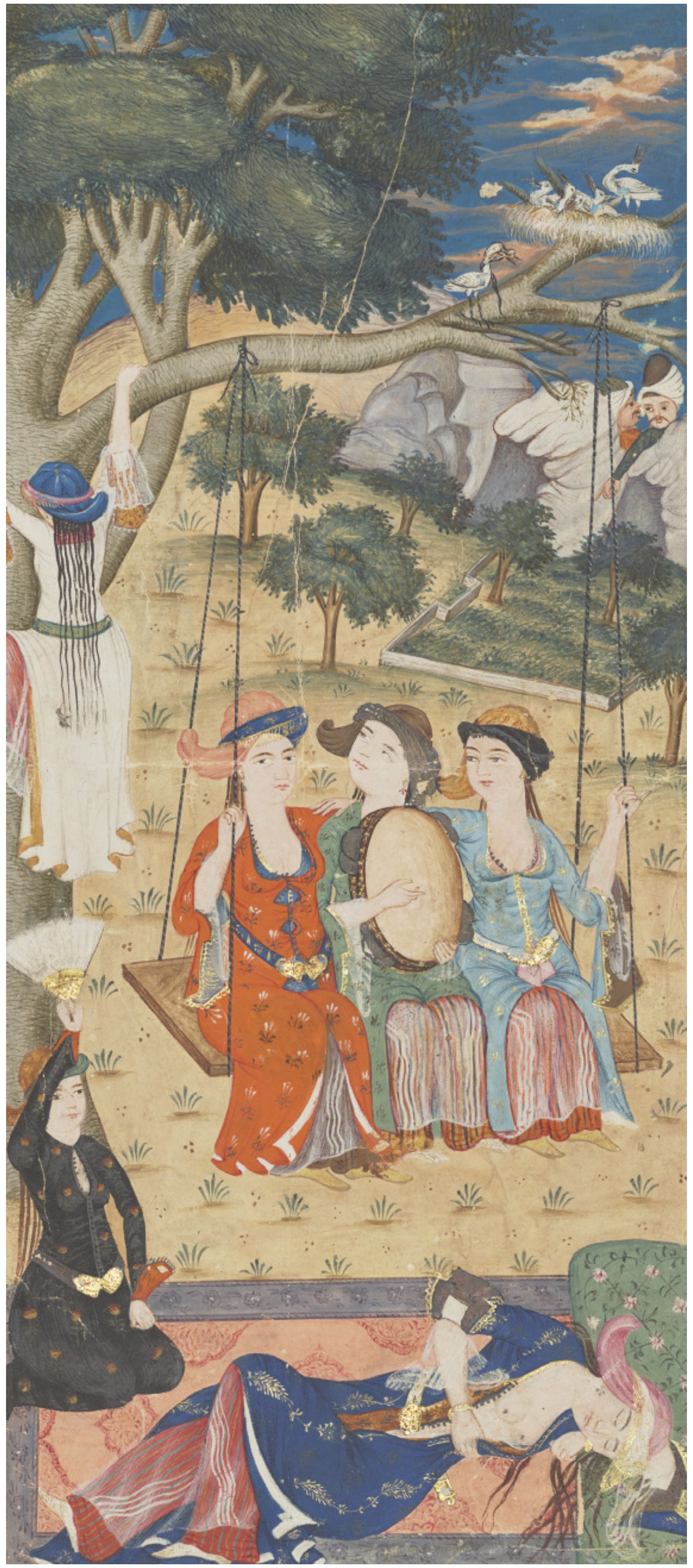
PROVENANCE:
Probably Princess Andrée Aga Khan (1898-1976)

Large calligraphic compositions such as this became popular in the Qajar period. They were believed to have intrinsic talismanic properties, and hence were copied on extremely thin parchment paper in order that they could be folded and stored in a small case to be carried on one's person. This parchment paper was more usually used as interleaves in illustrated or illuminated manuscripts, especially in Qajar Iran, a phenomenon discussed exhaustively in Desvergnes 2015. Though these may have been available commercially, it is also possible that they would have been carried by the copyist. Another large calligraphic composition is in the collection of the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. (Library of Congress Control number 2019714707). Other talismanic sheets featuring charts include examples in the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto (acc.no.AKM536), and another sold in these Rooms, 5 October 2012, lot 705.

On that example, a depiction of Ali, Hasan, Husayn and his brother Abbas are painted in panels at the upper end. The remarkable micrographic example offered here is more unusual in that the figures who appear are realised entirely in calligraphy. Such calligrams depicting the Imam Ali are known, such as on an album folio signed by Ibrahim Danishpishah and dated to AH 1344/1924-5 AD which is in the Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge MA (acc.no.1963.90). These draw on an older tradition of Shi'i devotional calligrams dating back to the Safavid period, particularly those symbolically representing Imam Ali as a lion.

The arrangement of figures in the calligram follows a set formula established elsewhere in Qajar visual culture. The same five men - Imam Ali, his sons Hasan and Husayn, their companion Qanbar, and the early Iranian convert to Islam Salman al-Farsi - appear on paintings by Isma'il Jalayir in the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (acc. no.2009.1143) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no.2018.500). They appear in the same arrangement as they do in our calligram in another painting in the Harvard Art Museum, which also includes cherub-like angels above the composition (acc.no.1958.137).





***92**

AN ALBUM FOLIO DEPICTING LADIES ON A SWING AND DERVISHES IN A LANDSCAPE

BY ABDULCELIL LEVNI (D.1732) AND HIS WORKSHOP,
OTTOMAN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, CIRCA 1720-30

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, recto with a scene of women relaxing in a landscape spied upon by two men, set within narrow green and gold borders black rules, verso with a scene of Mevlevi dervishes smoking pipes and drinking from small china cups, set within narrow orange and gold borders with black rules, both sides on silver flecked border stencilled with gold flowers, both sides with marginal annotations in black ink, mounted
Painting recto 10 x 4⅜in. (25.5 x 11.2cm.); painting verso 9¾ x 4⅝in. (24.7 x 11.8cm.); folio 12¼ x 7½in. (31.4 x 19.6cm.)

£30,000-50,000
US$41,000-68,000
€35,000-58,000

PROVENANCE:
Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1980

EXHIBITED:
Princes, Poets and Paladins, British Museum, London; Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University; Rietberg Museum, Zurich; Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1998-9

LITERATURE:
S. Canby, *Princes, Poets and Paladins*, London, 1998, no.74, p.102
S. Canby, *Princes, Poètes et Paladins*, Geneva, 1999, no.74, p.102
S. Prator and C. Neumann (eds.), *Festschrift Hans Georg Majer, Arts, Women and Scholars, Studies in Ottoman Society and Culture*, Istanbul, 2002, vol.1, cover illustration
N. Atasoy, "Scenes of Ottoman Women at Leisure" in S. Prator (ed.) *Festschrift Hans Georg Majer, Arts, Women and Scholars, Studies in Ottoman Society and Culture*, Istanbul, 2002, vol.2, p.398
A. Phillips, *Everyday Luxuries, Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople 1600-1800, Connecting Art Histories in the Museum*, vol.2, Dortmund, 2016, pp.111-18, fig.4.4

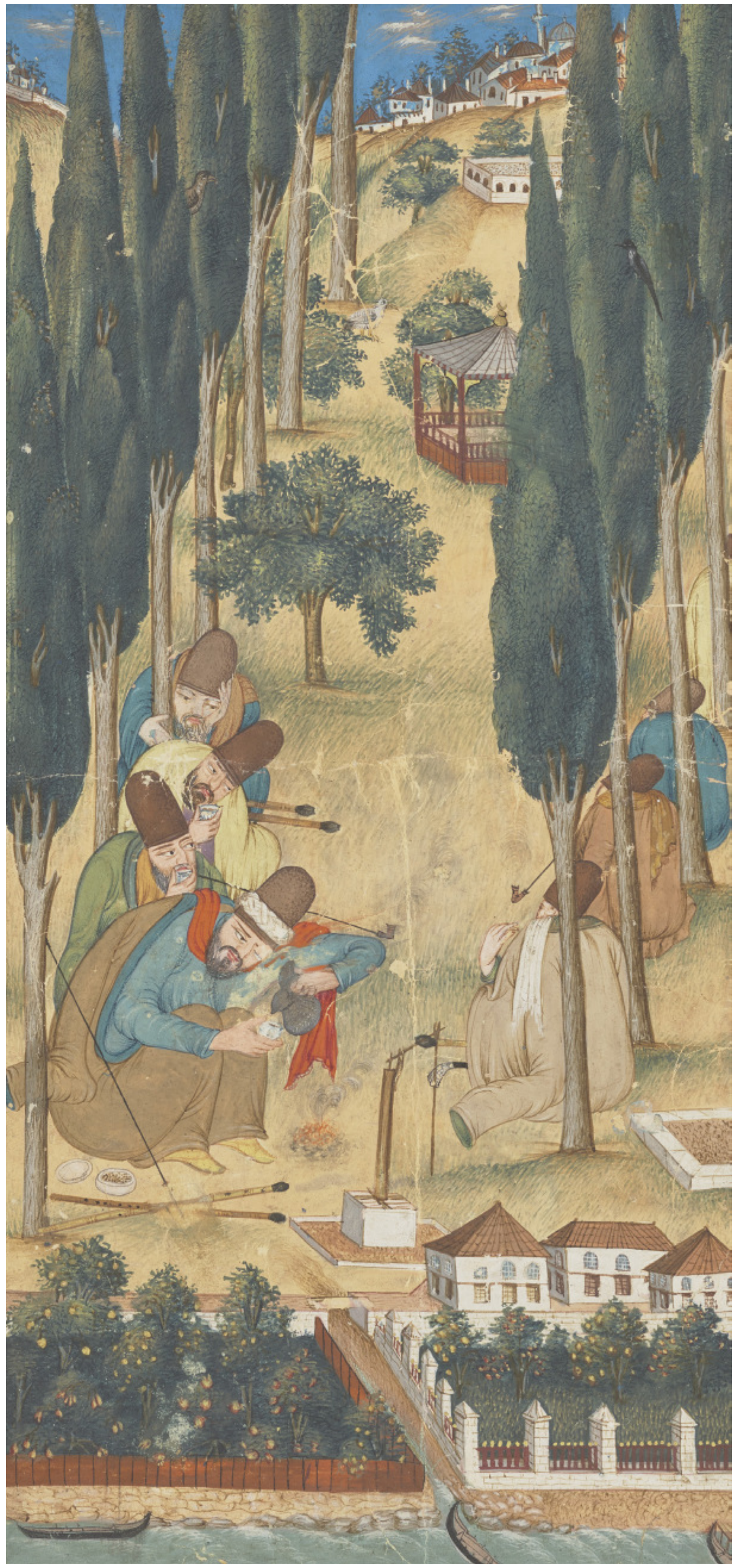
INSCRIPTIONS:
In the margin of the scene of ladies, 'Illustration 32, [ladies] enjoying themselves on a swing'
In the margin of the dervishes 'Illustration 33, the *mevlevi* of Dolmabahçe enjoying themselves'

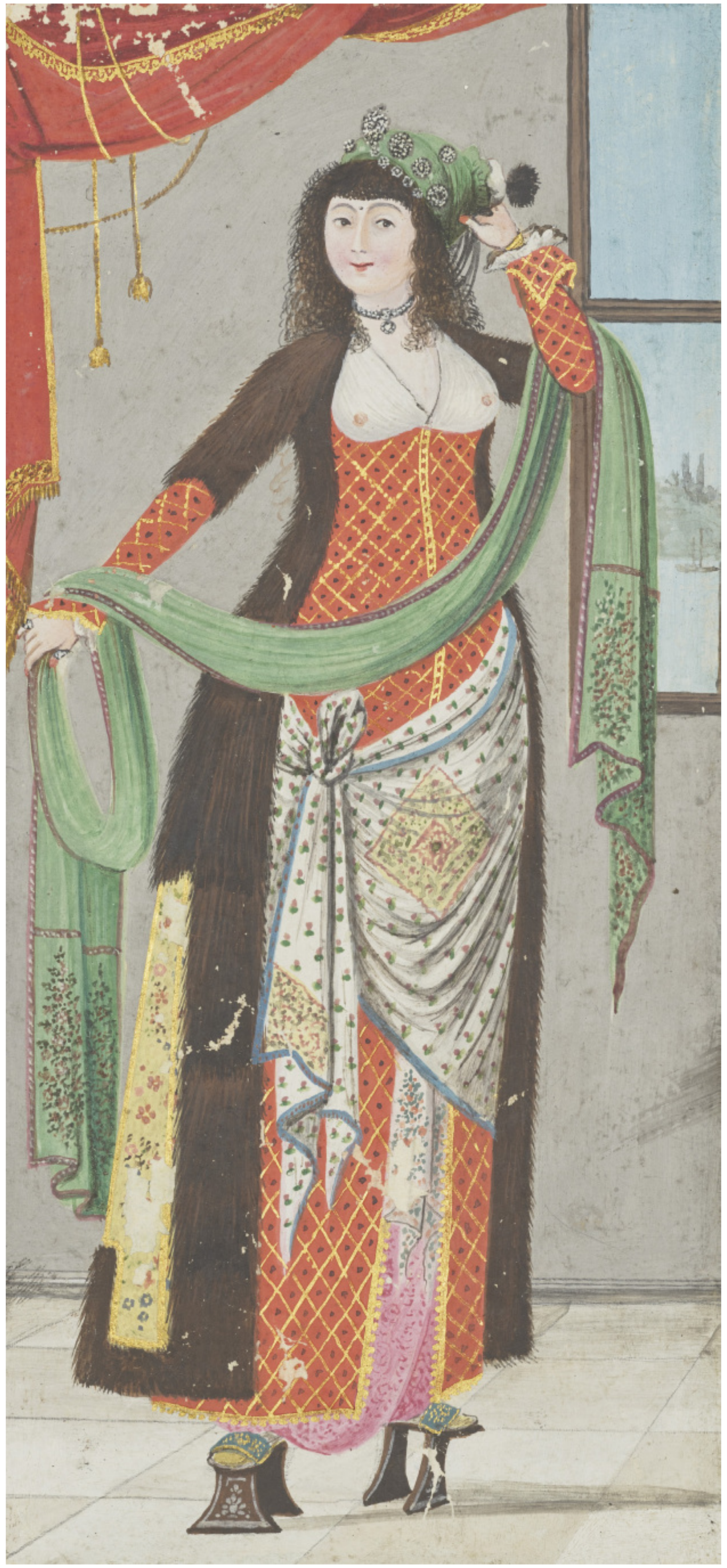
This double-sided Ottoman miniature is attributable to the court artist Levni (Abdülcelil Chelebi) who was active under the patronage of Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703-1730). Levni was perhaps the greatest exponent of the 'Tulip Period' - a moment in Ottoman history given to pleasure and extravagant living which saw a revival in the visual arts. Born in Edirne, Levni began his career as an illuminator and decorator but became known for the painting of portraits for albums, particularly single figure studies of the fashionable figures of Istanbul (Atasoy and Çagman 1974, p.76). Whilst he adopted the static poses and classical style of the early 17th century, he reproduced them in a softer but freer and livelier manner.

In 1720, the year he was appointed *naqqash bashi,* Levni began work on illustrations to the *Surnama* of Vehbi, perhaps his most important work, which recounted the festivals of Sultan Ahmed's court. Our paintings are similarly narrative. On one side we see a lady asleep in the foreground, her elegant dress falling away as she is fanned by a servant. Three girls sit on a swing behind her and another climbs a tree – giving a rare view of a figure being depicted from the back. On the horizon two moustachioed men spy on them from behind a rocky outcrop, in a manner borrowed from a Persian pictorial tradition. Amanda Phillips writes that despite this Persianate feature, Levni clearly grounds the painting in 18th century Istanbul, partly through the costume - expensive floral kaftans and fashionable *hotoz* headgear are worn by the ladies and distinctive turbans, of a type known as *külah* (which comprise a tall conical hat wrapped in muslin), are worn by the men (Phillips 2016, p.118). She also notes the nest of storks, whose arrival in Istanbul signals spring and whose nests are said to ward off fire and pestilence.

On the other side of our folio is another illustration, thought not to be the work of Levni himself, but rather a member of his workshop. It depicts of a group of seven dervishes crouching on a hilly bank in Dolmabahçe, sipping coffee, smoking opium or sleeping – with the Bosphorous before them. Sheila Canby had suggested that the common theme between the two paintings is one of sleep, and that the folio might come from a treatise on Sufism (Canby 1998, p.102).

Amanda Phillips has more recently studied this folio and places it in the context of other paintings which come from the same original album – all with gold-flecked paper margins, peppered with floral flourishes. They may have originally be from an anthology of poetry. Seven are known, three of which are in Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin (inv.nr.I.28.751-c). All have similar identifying notations in the margins, mostly identifying as them as different *majalis,* or gatherings. The sequence of numbers indicate that they must originally have been part of a series of at least 35 (Phillips 2016, p.112). As Phillips writes, 'the paintings all depict Ottoman subjects enjoying Istanbul, or occasionally suffering in it' (Phillips 2016, p.111). She writes that the paintings have a direct connection to the city of Istanbul – 'all evoking the city, sometimes even depicting specific and identifiable places' (Phillips 2016, p.112).





*93

AN ILLUSTRATED FOLIO FROM A MANUSCRIPT OF THE *ZENANNAME* OF HUSAYN FAZIL BEG

OTTOMAN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, CIRCA 1790-1800

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, recto with a Turkish lady with her servant in a landscape, verso with a fashionable woman indoors, set within broad gold rules, the margins plain, mounted, framed and glazed
Paintings 6¾ x 3⅛in. (17.1 x 8cm.) and 6¾ x 5⅝in. (17.1 x 9.3cm.); folio 9¾ x 5¾in. (24.9 x 14.5cm.)

£12,000-18,000
US$17,000-24,000
€14,000-21,000

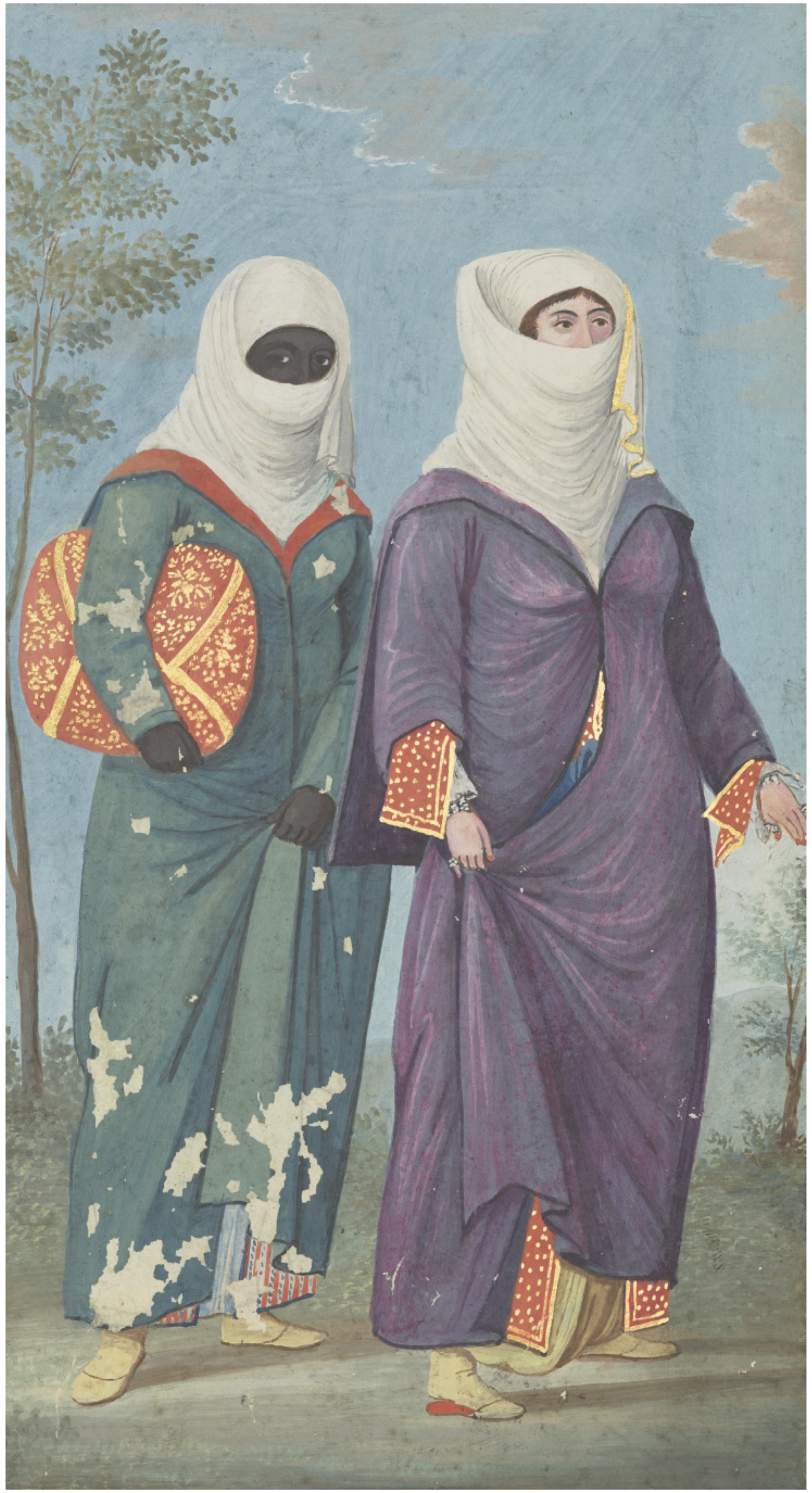
PROVENANCE:
Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984

EXHIBITED:
Art Ottoman: Objets d'art de l'Islam - Centenaire de la Maison Soustiel 1883-1983, Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984

LITERATURE:
J. Soustiel and M-C. David, *Art Ottoman: Objets d'art de l'Islam - Centenaire de la Maison Soustiel 1883-1983*, Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984, pp.10-11

This folio, and that of the following lot come from a copy of the *Zenanname*, or the 'Attributes of Ladies of Many Lands' of Husayn Fazl Beg (also known as Fazil-i Enderuni, circa 1757-1810). The text was produced for a Turkish patron during the last quarter of the 18th century. We know that Husayn Fazl Beg began his education in the imperial palace in 1776 and was disgraced after he was implicated in a romantic scandal and expelled in 1783-4. He lived a life of poverty in Istanbul for a period of twelve years and after being pardoned in 1799 was again disgraced and banished to Rhodes, where he lost his sight. It was likely during his periods of disgrace that he gained the experience upon which he wrote the erotic verses for which he became notorious. His works include the *Defter-i 'ask*, a versified journal of his love affairs; the *Hubanname*, a celebration of beautiful youths from the Ottoman Empire and beyond; the *Çengîname*, on the dancing boys of Istanbul; and the *Zenanname*, on girls, their qualities and defects (Rogers 1995, p.228). Both the *Zenanname* and the *Hubanname* build upon the Ottoman vogue for costume albums, see for instance an album in the Topkapi, illustrated by Levni between 1710-20 (TSM,H.2164).

Another folio which appears to be from the same original manuscript, which depicts a genre scene of a birth in the harem, is now in the LACMA (formerly in the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, M.85.237.100). Folios from a related copy of the *Zenanname* were sold in these Rooms, 12 October 1978, lots 44 and 45, now in the Khalili Collection (MSS817.1-3); and the British Museum (1946,0209,0.1). Complete copies of the *Zenanname* are in Istanbul University, dated AH 1206/1791-2 AD (IUK, MS.T.5502) and in the British Library, dated AH 1190/1774 AD (Or.7094). A complete copy of the *Hubanname* is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (M.91.93).



*94

WOMEN ENJOYING THE RESORT OF KAĞITHANE

OTTOMAN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, CIRCA 1790-1800

An illustration to the *Zenanname* of Husayn Fazil Beg, opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, depicting the ladies of Istanbul relaxing in the Kagithane park near the Saadabad pavilion, set within gold rules, reverse plain with empty text panel, mounted, framed and glazed
Painting 5 x 9½in. (12.8 x 24.1cm.)

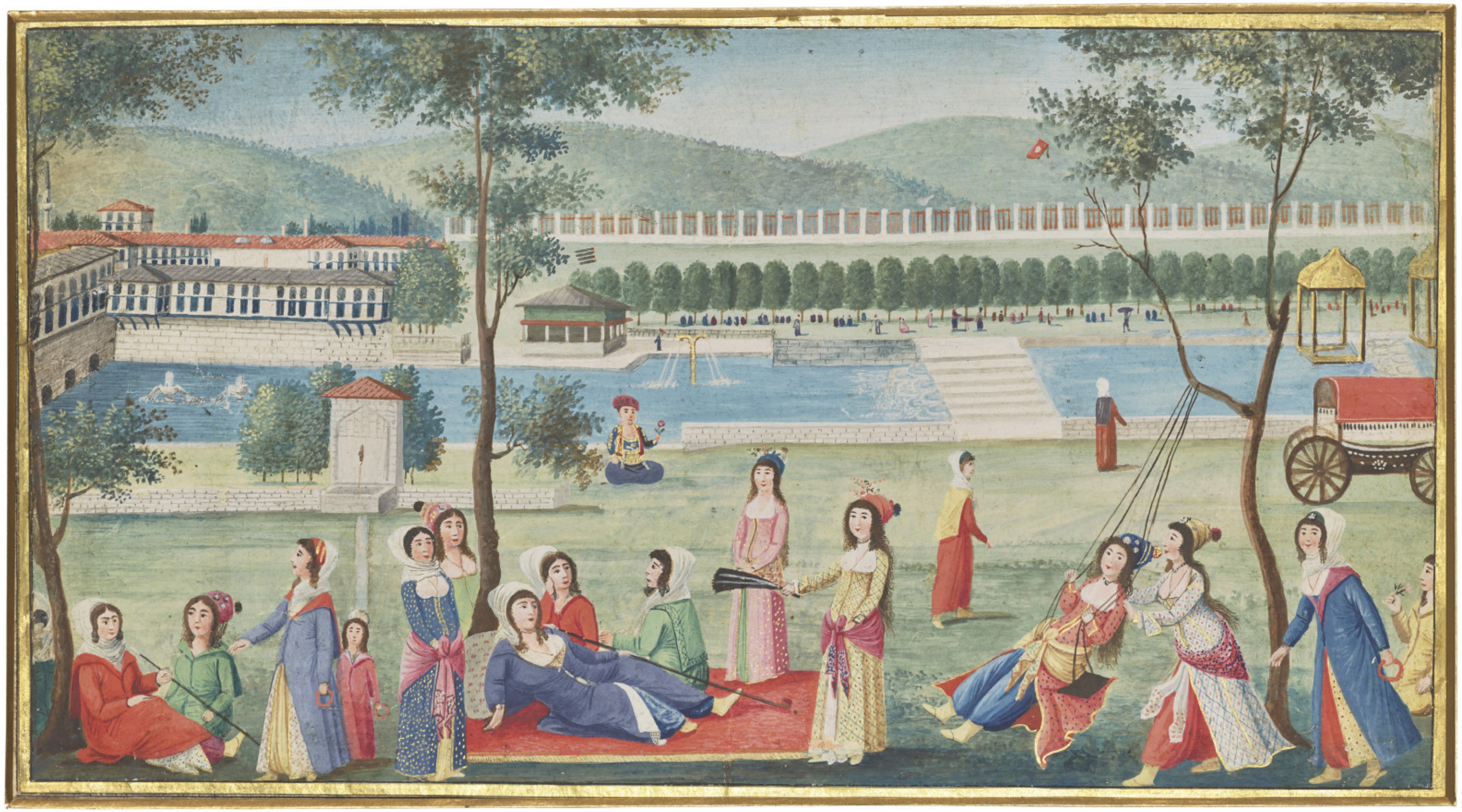
£15,000-25,000
US$21,000-34,000
€18,000-29,000

PROVENANCE:
Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984

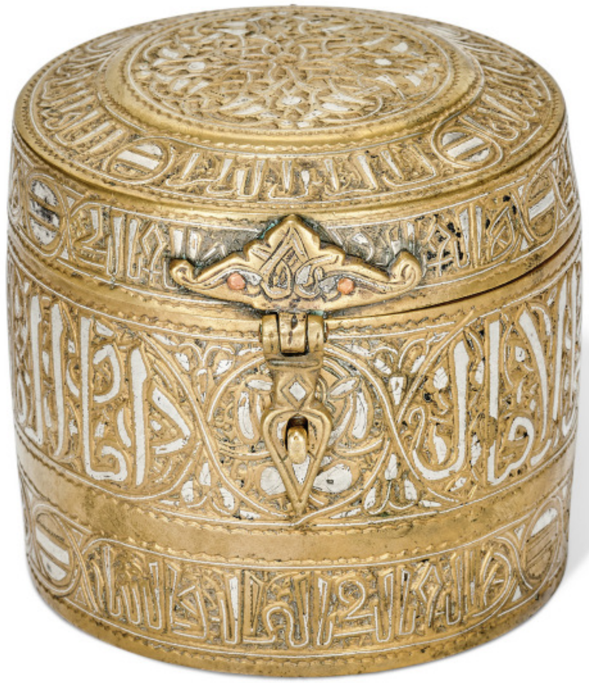
EXHIBITED:
Art Ottoman: Objets d'art de l'Islam - Centenaire de la Maison Soustiel 1883-1983, Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984

LITERATURE:
J. Soustiel and M-C. David, *Art Ottoman: Objets d'art de l'Islam - Centenaire de la Maison Soustiel 1883-1983,* Galerie Soustiel, Paris, 1984, pp.12-13

For a discussion on the *Zenanname,* the text which this folio would have illustrated, please see the footnote to the previous lot. Although the majority of the illustrations to the *Zenanname* are studies of individual women from different lands – from India to the New World – a few paintings depict groups of women, in this case enjoying life in the capital. This scene has a counterpart in the British Library *Zenanname* (Or.7094, f.7r), and in the in the Istanbul University copy (IUK, MS.T.5502). It depicts outdoor festivities at Kağıthane, a popular resort in the 18th century. Many of the individual vignettes across the paintings are the same – from the languid woman leaning back and smoking, attentively fanned by her attendants, to a lady being pushed on a swing, the cross-legged gentleman holding a flower, or even the red kite hanging from the tree. The panoramic view of the background of all beholds palaces and pools. Their similarity suggests that the artist responsible for our manuscript was familiar with those now in the British Library and Istanbul University.



Major Rohde Hawkins (1821-1884)
© Heath-Caldwell Family Archive



***95**

A SILVER-INLAID BRASS PYXIS

MAMLUK EGYPT OR SYRIA, SECOND HALF 13TH CENTURY

The cylindrical body with hinged beveled cover with trefoil lock, the body with a band of inlaid silver *thuluth* punctuated by roundels of seated astrological figures, smaller bands of *kufic* above and below in oval cartouches alternated with blazons, the cover with a circular field of interlacing split palmettes encircled by a calligraphic band alternating with roundels, the base plain with old label
3¾in. (9.4cm.) high

£70,000-100,000
US$96,000-140,000
€81,000-120,000

PROVENANCE:
Major Rohde Hawkins (1821-1884)
Christie's London, *The Valuable Collection of Objects of Art of the Late M. Rohde Hawkins Esq*, 9 June 1891, lot 182
Stuart Cary Welch (1928-2008), Cambridge, MA

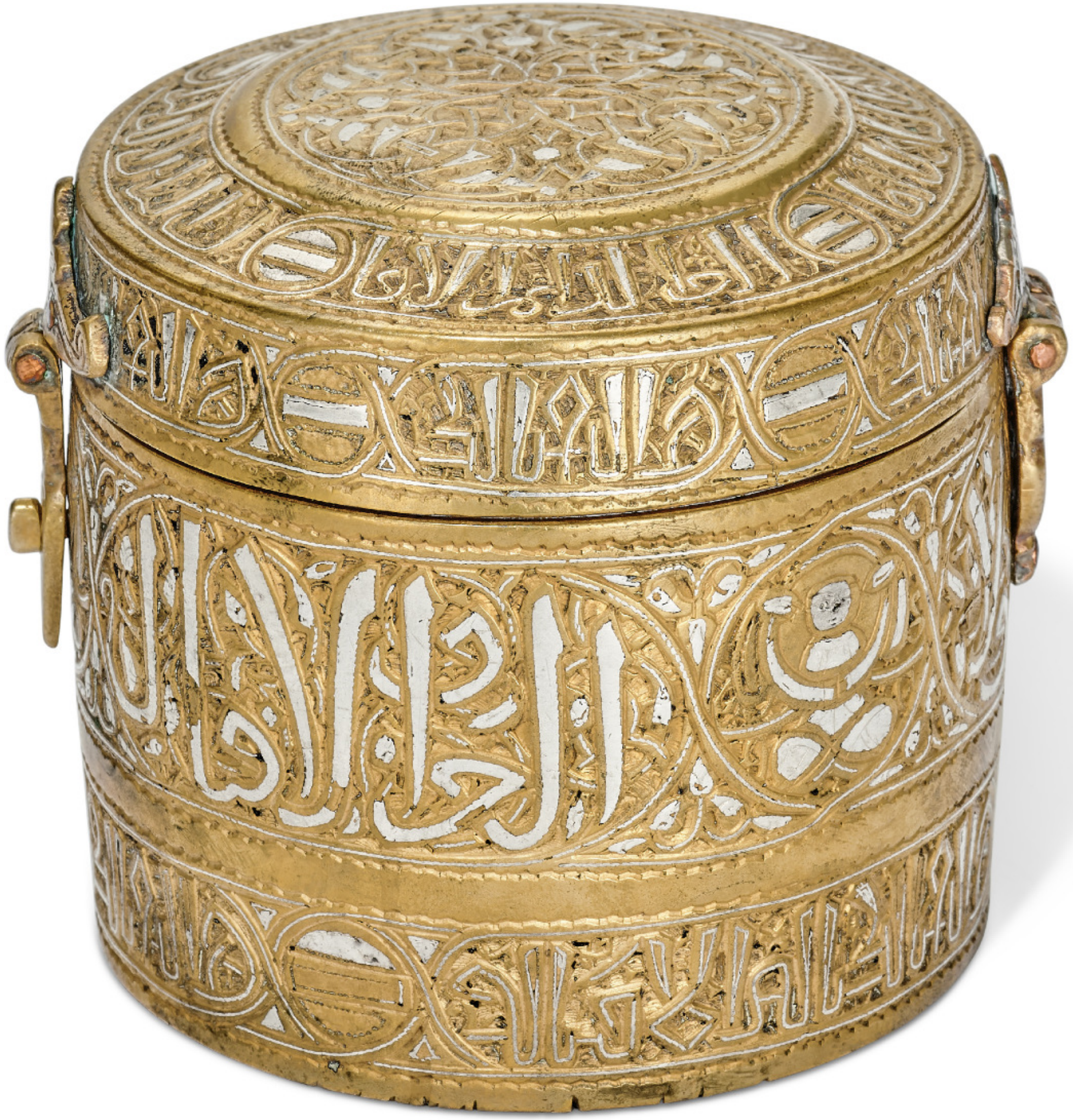
EXHIBITED:
Victoria & Albert Museum, circa 1850
On temporary loan, probably at Harvard University Arts Museums, circa 1960s-1970s.

INSCRIPTIONS:
The upper band, in *kufic*, repetitions of two words, possibly, *al-'izz [a]l-da['im],* 'Perpetual glory'
Middle band, in *thuluth*, *al-'izz wa'l-iqbal | dama wa'l-baqa laka | ayyuha al-mawla ...,* 'May glory and success be perpetual and may long life be yours O Master! ...'
Lower band, in *kufic*, repeated, *al-'izz [a]l-da'im [wa']l-iqbal ...,* 'Perpetual glory [and] success ...'
Around the lid, *al-'izz al-da'im [a]l-iq[b]al | al-za['i]d ... | ... al-karama(?) |... al-amr al-nafidh ...,* 'Perpetual glory, increasing success ... generosity ... penetrating authority ...'

A similar pyxis to that offered here is in the collection of the State Hermitage Museum (acc.no.ИР-1490). It is identical in form, with a similarly chamfered lid and straight sides. It also has a very comparable trefoil latch terminal. Like ours the body of the Hermitage pyxis has a central band with a bold silver-inlaid inscription interrupted by figural roundels. That is attributed to 13th century Syria. The three-fielded shield that punctuates the minor calligraphic bands of our pyxis is one that appears several times as a blazon of the Bahri Mamluks, especially those who were elevated to the rank of amir in the second half of the 13th century (Mayer 1999 reprint, p.17).

The Victoria & Albert Museum has, amongst its holdings, an electotype of our pyxis (REPRO.1854C-32). The box was created by Elkington and Co. at Gore House, Kensington, in 1854. The Victoria and Albert Museum has its origins in the Great Exhibition of 1851. It's establishment, initially as the 'Museum of Manufactures' was driven by the desire of the first director, Henry Cole, to improve British design and manufacturing. When John Charles Robinson became curator in 1853, the focus expanded to include historic art and high-quality reproductions—like electrotypes, plaster casts, and photographs. These cutting-edge technologies made art more accessible, allowing students and the public to study both modern and historic works that were otherwise out of reach. That they selected our medieval pyxis as the basis for one of their electrotypes indicates that it was a well-known and respected example of Mamluk metalwork even in the 1850s.

Our pyxis was formerly in the collection of Major Rohde Hawkins (1821–1884), an architect who trained under Thomas Cubitt, known for Osborne House and parts of Buckingham Palace. Hawkins later collaborated with Edward Blore, another important royal architect. Though connected to major figures, Hawkins mainly designed churches and schools and was appointed official school architect by the Privy Council's Education Department. He was also a collector. His father, Edward Hawkins (1780-1867), had been the Keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum. When his architectural studies were complete and before setting up his own practice, he worked for his father – travelling across the Middle East and Asia in search of antiquities worthy of study and acquisition. It is likely that this is how he came to own this pyxis.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackerman 1940 Ackerman, P., *Guide to the Exhibition of Persian Art,* The Iranian Institute, New York, 1940

Adamova 1996 Adamova, A. *Persidskaya zhivopis i risynok XV – XIX vekov v sobranii Ermitazha.* St Petersburg, 1996.

Adamova 2000 Adamova, A., ‘On the Attribution of Persian Paintings and Drawings of the Time of Shah Abbas I: Seals and Attributory Inscriptions’, in Hillenbrand, Robert (ed.), *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson*, London, 2000

Adamova 2003 Adamova, A., ‘Muhammad Qasim and the Isfahan School of Painting’, in Newman, A.J. (ed.), *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period,* Leiden, 2003, pp. 193-212

Adamova 2008 Adamova, A., *Mediaeval Persian Painting: The Evolution of an Artistic Vision,* New York, 2008

Adle 1993 Adle, C., ‘Les artistes nommés Dust-Mohammad au XVIe siècle’, Studia Iranica 22/2, 1993, pp. 272-75

Adle 1996 Adle, C., ‘DUST-MOHAMMAD MOSAWWER,’*Encyclopaedia Iranica*, VII/ 6, 1996

Adle, Habib and Baipakov 2003 Adle, C., Habib, I. and Baipakov, K.M., *History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Volume V, Development in contrast: from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century*, UNESCO Paris, 2003

Akbarnama 1907 *The Akbarnama of Abu'l Fazl*, tr. By Beveridge, H., Calcutta, 1907

Alam and Alavi 2008 Alam, M. and Alavi, S., *A European Experience of the Mughal Orient, The I'jaz-i Arsalani (Persian Letters, 1773- 1779) of Antoine-Louis Polier,* Delhi, 2008

Alaoui and Digard 2002 Alaoui, B. and Digard, J. et al., Chevaux et cavaliers arabes *dans les arts d'Orient et d'Occident, Paris, 2002*

Amabal 1987 Ambalal, A., *Krishna as Shrinathji,* Ahmedabad, 1987

Ames 1997 Ames, F., *The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French influence*, 3rd edition, Woodbridge, 1997

Anvar 2021 Anvar, L., Leyli et Majnûn de Jâmi, illustré par les miniatures *d'Orient, Paris, 2021*

April 1993 *The Unstruck Sound. Darshan, In the Company of Saints*, No. 73, April 1993

Arbery, Robinson, Blochet and Wilkinson 1962 Arberry, J., Robinson, B. W., Blochet, E., and Wilkinson, J. V. S., *The Chester Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures,* Vol. 3, Dublin, 1962

Archer 1959 Archer, M., *Tippoo's Tiger,* London, 1959

Archer 1960 Archer, W.G., *Indian Miniatures*, London, 1960

Archer 1973 Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London and New York, 1973

Archer 1976 Archer, W.G., *Visions of Courtly India,* London, 1976

Archer 1979 Archer, M., *India and British Portraiture, 1770-1825,* London, 1979

Archer 1883 Archer, E., *Tours In Upper India And Himalaya Mountains,* vol.1, London, 1833

Archer 1989 Archer, M. and Falk, T., *India Revealed: The Art and Adventures of James and W. Fraser 1801-35,* London, 1989

Arnold 1916 Arnold, T.W., ‘Some unpublished Persian paintings of the Safavid Period’, *Journal of Indian Art and Letters*, no. 135, July 1916

Arpen 2007 Arpen, K., *Making History: The Constructions of Johann Zoffany's ‘Colonel Antoine Polier, Claud Martin and John Wombwell with the Artist’ (1786-7),* MA thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007

Atasoy and Çagman 1974 Atasoy, N. and Çagman, F., *Turkish Miniature Painting,* Istanbul, 1974

Atasoy 2002 Atasoy, N., ‘Scenes of Ottoman Women at Leisure’in Prator, Sabine (ed.) *Festschrift Hans Georg Majer, Arts, Women and Scholars, Studies in Ottoman Society and Culture,* Istanbul, 2002, vol. 2

Baburnama 1922 *The Baburnama in English (Memoirs of Babur),* tr. Beveridge, A. S., London, 1922

Baer 2004 Baer, E., *The Human Figure in Islamic Art: Inheritances and Islamic transformation*, Costa Mesa, 2004

Barry 2004 Barry, M.A., *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam and the Riddle of Bihzad of Herat (1465-1535)*, Paris, 2004

Bautze 1998 Bautze, J., *Interaction of Cultures: Indian and Western Painting 1780-1910*, Alexandria, 1998

Bayani 1348 Bayani, M., *Ahval va asar-e khosh-nevisan,* vol 3. Tehran, 1348 *sh*

Bayat 2009 Bayat, B., *Tarıkh-i Humayun*, in *Three Memoirs of Humayun's Reign,* Thackston, Wheeler M. (ed. and tr.), Costa Mesa, 2009

Bazmee 1991 Bazmee Ansari, A. S., ‘FARRUKHABAD’, Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd Edition, Leiden, 1991, vol. II, pp.808-809

Beach 1978 Beach, M.C., *The Grand Mogul, Imperial Painting in India 1600-1660*, W.stown MA., 1978

Beach 1987 Beach, M.C., *Early Mughal Painting*, Cambridge MA., 1987

Beach 1996 Beach, M.C., ‘Basawan’in *The Grove Dictionary of Art*, 1996, OUP, vol.3, p.319-21

Beach 2009 Beach, M.C., ‘Basawan’in *The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, eds. Blair and Bloom, OUP 2009, vol.1, pp.268-70

Beach 2012 Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image, Paintings from the Mughal Court,* Washington, DC., 2012

Becherini 2018 Becherini, M., ‘Effigies in transit: Deccan Portraits in Europe at the turn of the 18th century’, *Journal 18, issue 6,* Fall 2018, unpaginated

Bernier 1826 Bernier, F., *Travels in the Mogul Empire,* London, 1826

Bernus-Taylor 2007 Bernus-Taylor, M., ‘Le Prince et le Derviche’, Connaissance des *Arts, Special Issue Furusiyya, 2007*

Biney 1966 Binney, E., Islamic Art from the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, Washington, DC., 1966

Binney 1973 Binney, E., *Turkish Miniature Paintings and Manuscripts from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd,* exhibition catalogue, New York, 1973

Binyon, Wilkinson and Gray 1933 Binyon, L., Wilkinson, J.V.S. and Gray, B., *Persian Miniature Painting*, London, 1933

Blochmann 1878 Blochmann, H., *Ain-i-Akbari,* Volume 1, Calcutta, 1878

Bloom and Blair 2009 Bloom, J. and Blair, S. (eds.), The Grove Encyclopaedia of Islamic Art and Architecture, vol. 3, Oxford, 2009

Bordeaux 1998 *La Route des Indes, Les Indes et l'Europe, Échanges Artistiques et Heritage Commun 1650-1850, Bordeaux, 1998*

Botchkareva 2018 Botchkareva, A.A., ‘Topographies of Taste: Aesthetic practice in 18th century Persianate Albums’, *Journal 18,* Issue 6, Fall 2018, unpaginated

Boye 1996 Boye, J. (ed.), L'Extraordinaire Aventure de Benoit de Boigne aux *I ndes,* Chambéry, 1996

Brand and Lowry 1985 Brand, M. and Lowry, G.D., Akbar's India, Art from the *Mughal City of Victory, New York, 1985*

Brinkmann 2020 Brinkmann, B., et al., *Rembrandt's Orient, West Meets East in Dutch Art of the 17th Century*, Munich, 2020

Brugière and Bor 2003 Brugière, P. and Bor, J., Gloire des princes, louange des dieux, *Patrimoine musical de l'Hindoustan du XIVe au XXe siècle,* Paris, 2003

Canby 1990 Canby, S., ‘Age and Time in the Work of Riza’ in Canby, S. (ed.), *Persian Masters, five centuries of painting, Marg Publications, 1990,* pp.71-84

Canby 1993 Canby, S., Persian Painting, London, 1993

Canby 1996a Canby, S., ‘Riza’, *The Grove Dictionary of Art*, London, 1996, vol. 26

Canby 1996b Canby, S., *The Rebellious Reformer, The Drawings and Paintings of Reza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996

Canby 1998a Canby, S., Der Glanz des Orients, Islamische Malerei der *Sammlung Prinz und Prinzessin Sadruddin Aga Khan, Zurich, 1998*

Canby 1998b Canby, S., Princes, Poets and Paladins, London, 1998

Canby 1999a Canby, S., Princes, Poètes et Paladins, Geneva, 1999

Canby 1999b Canby, S., The Golden Age of Persian Art, 1501-1722, London, 1999

Canby 2009 Canby, S., Shah Abbas and the Remaking of Iran, London, 2009

Chaldecott 2003 Chaldecott, N., *Dhurries, History, Pattern, Technique, Identification*, London, 2003

Chandra 1976 Chandra, P., *The Tutinama of the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Origins of Mughal Painting*, Graz, 1976

Chandra 2021 Chandra, Y., *The Tale of the Horse, A History of India on Horseback*, New Delhi, 2021

Chattopadhyay 2023 Chattopadhyay, S., *Small Spaces: Recasting the Architecture of Empire*, London, 2023

Collaço 2021 Collaço, G., “World-Seizing albums: imported paintings from ‘Acem and Hindustan in an Eclectic Ottoman Market”, *Ars Orientalis,* 51, 2021, pp.133-87

Coomaraswamy 1929 Coomaraswamy, A.K., Les Miniatures de la Collection *Goloubev au Museum of Fine Arts de Boston, Ars Asiatica, XIII,* 1929

Crowe 2002 Crowe, Y., *Persia and China, Safavid Blue and White Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, 2002

Croymans 2018 Croymans, L., *Cultural Diplomacy during Shah Abbas I: Jan Lucasz Van Hasselt and Huybert Visnich*, MA Thesis, Free University of Brussels, 2018

Crill 1999 Crill, R., *Textiles in the Panjab,* in Stronge, Susan (ed.), *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms,* London, 1999, pp.115-33

Cummins 2006 Cummins, J., *Indian Painting: From Cave Temples to the Colonial Period,* Boston, 2006

Dalrymple 2002 Dalrymple, W., *White Mughals,* London, 2002

Dalrymple 2006 Dalrymple, W., *The Last Mughal, The Fall of Delhi 1857*, London, 2006

Dalrymple 2019 Dalrymple, W. (ed.), *Forgotten Masters. Indian Painting for the East India Company*, exhibition catalogue, London, 2019

Das 2012 Das, Asok Kumar, *Wonders of Nature,* Marg, Mumbai, December 2012

De Bernard 1876 “Kashmyr et ses Chales”, Le Monde Illustré, 26 January 1867, pp.56- *7*

De Bruijn 1997 De Bruijn, J., ‘SHIFA'I ISFAHANI’, in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd E dition, Leiden, 1997, vol. IX, p.434

De Hond 2020a De Hond, J., ‘’Utterly Useless’ or ‘Exceedingly Noble’ Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid Art in the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, in Brinkmann, B., Dette, G., Philpp, M., and Westheaider, O.(eds.), *Rembrandt's Orient, West Meets East in Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century*, Munich, 2020

De Hond 2020b De Hond, J., in de Hond, C.D., Amélie, S., Leila, S., Foroughi and Paolo d'Imporzano, ‘An Iranian Youth in aN Album from Zwolle’, The Rijkmuseum Bulletin, Vol. 68, No. 3, 2020, pp. 204-231

Delhi 1990 *Shah Jahan Nama of Inayat Khan*, Fuller, A.R. (tr.), Begley, W.E. and Desai,, Z.A. (eds.), Delhi, 1990

Desvergnes 2015 Desvergnes, A. C. ‘Skin against paper: identification of historical interleaving materials in Indo-Iranian manuscripts’. *The Book and Paper Group Annual* 34, 2015, pp.130-9

Diamond 2013 Diamond, D.(ed.), *Yoga, The Art of Transformation,* Washington, DC., 2013

Diamond and Glynn 2008 Diamond, D. and Glynn, C., *Garden and Cosmos: The Royal Paintings of Jodhpur*, 2008

Diba 1989 Diba, L., ‘Persian Painting in the Eighteenth Century: Tradition and Transmission’, *Muqarnas,* Vol 6, 1989, pp.147-160

Dickson and Welch 1981 Dickson, M.B. and Welch, S.C., *The Houghton Shahnama*, Cambridge, MA., 1981

Digard 2005 Digard, J., ‘Cat II. Persian Cat’, in *Encyclopedia Iranica* [online], 2005

Divyabhanusinh 1995 Divyabhanusinh, C., *The End of a Trail*, New Delhi, 1995

Divyabhanusinh 2023 Divyabhanusinh, C., *The Story of India's Cheetahs*, Marg, Mumbai, 2023

du Pasquier 2007 du Pasquier, J., Histoire du Verre: les chefs-d'oeuvre de l'Islam, Paris, 2007

Dye 1989 Dye, J.M., ‘Artists for the Emperor’, in Pal, P., Lesokho, J., Dye, J.M. and Markel, S., *The Romance of the Taj Mahal*, Los Angeles and London, 1989

Ebeling 1973 Ebeling, K. *Ragamala Painting,* Basel, Paris, New Delhi, 1973

Eden 1866 Eden, E., *Up the Country,* Volume I, London, 1866

Ekhtiar 1994 Ekhtiar, H., ‘Who Painted Princes of the House of Timur’, in Canby, S. (ed.), *Humayun's Garden Party*, Marg, Mumbai, 1994

Ekhtiar 2011 Ekhtiar, M. and Canby, S., Najat Haidar, Navina, and Soucek, Priscilla, *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,* New York, 2011

Eng 2016 Eng, R., ‘MO'IN-E MOSAVVER’, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, online edition, 2016

Ernst 2013 Ernst, C., ‘Muslim interpreters of Yoga’in Diamond, D. (ed.), *Yoga, The Art of Transformation,* Washington, DC., 2013, pp.55-66

Ettinghausen 1961 Ettinghausen, R., *Paintings of the Sultans and Emperors of India in American Collections,* New Delhi, 1961

Falk 1976 Falk, T., ‘Rothschild Collection of Mughal Miniatures’, in Persian and Mughal Art, Colnaghi, London, 1976

Falk 1978 Falk, T., ‘Mughal and Rajput Painting’, *Indian Painting, Mughal and Rajput, and a Sultanate Manuscript*, Colnaghi, London, 1978

Falk 1979 Falk, T.and Digby, S., *Paintings from Mughal India,* London, 1979

Falk and Archer 1981 Falk, T.and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981

Falk 1985 Falk, T. (ed.), Treasures of Islam, Geneva and London, 1985

Falk 1988 Falk, T., ‘The Fraser Company Drawings’, *Sir George Birdwood Memorial Lecture,* 5 May 1988, Royal Society of Arts, London

Farhad 1985 Farhad, M., in Falk, T.(ed.), *Treasures of Islam,* London and Geneva, 1985, p.119

Farhad 1990 Farhad, M., ‘The Art of Mu'in Musavvir: A Mirror of His Times’, in Canby, S. (ed.), *Persian Masters, five centuries of painting,* Marg Publications, 1990, pp.113-128

Farhad and Shreve-Simpson 1993 Farhad, M. and Shreve-Simpson, M., ‘Sources for the study of Safavid painting and patronage, or *méfiez-vous de Qazi Ahmad*’, *Muqarnas*, vol.10, 1993, pp.286-91

Floor 1996 Floor, W., ‘DUTCH-PERSIAN RELATIONS’, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol.VII, Fasc.6, 1996, pp.603-613

Fox 1987 Fox, E., ‘Miniature Empires. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's Collection of Islamic Art’, *Art and Auction*, October 1987

Fraser 1820 Fraser, J.B., *Journal of a tour through part of the snowy range of the Himalaya mountains and the source of the rivers Jumna and Ganges,* London, 1820

Fraser 2021 Fraser, M., ‘Muhammad Riza-i Hindi. An important Indo-Persian Artist of the Mid-Eighteenth Century’ in von Folsach, K. and Meyer, J. (eds.), *Journal of the David Collection*, Volume 5, Copenhagen, 2021, pp. 178-229

Galloway 1994 Galloway, F., *Indian Miniatures, Textile Art*, London, 1994

Goswamy and Fischer 1987 Goswamy, B.N. and Fischer, E., *Wonders of a Golden Age*, Zurich, 1987

Goswamy and Fischer 1992 Goswamy, B.N. and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters, Court Painters of Northern India,* Artibus Asiae Supplement XXXVIII, Zurich, 1992

Goswamy 2005 Goswamy, B.N. and Smith, C., *Domains of Wonder*, San Diego, 2005

Goswamy 2011 Goswamy, B.N., ‘Masters of the Company Portraits’ in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E. and Goswamy, B.N.(eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting,* vol. 2, Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, II/II, 2011

Goswamy 2016 Goswamy, B.N., *The Spirit of Indian Painting*, London, 2016

Grabar 2009a Grabar, O., Images en terres d' Islam, Paris, 2009

Grabar 2009b Grabar, O., Masterpieces of Islamic Art, the Decorated Page from *the 8th to the 17th century, Munich, 2009*

Graves 2011 Graves, M.S. et al., Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum - Arts of the *Book & Calligraphy, Istanbul, 2011*

Green 2020 Green, G., ‘The East India Company's Stud Farm in Essex’*, British Library Blogs: Untold Lives*, online, 19 March 2020, accessed 10 September 2025

Habighorst 2007 Habighorst, L., Genuss und Rauch, Koblenz, 2007

Haidar 2016 Haidar, N.N., ‘Giant Butterfly, Tiny Tree: Leaps of Scale in Deccani Painting’ in Aitken, M.E. (ed.), *A Magic World, New Visions of Indian Painting,* Marg Publications, vol. 68, No. 2, December 2016

Haidar 2018 Haidar, N.N., *Treasures of the Deccan,* Chennai, 2018

Harris 2001 Harris, L., ‘Archibald Swinton: a new source for albums of Indian miniatures in William Beckford's collection’, *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 143, No. 1179, June 2001, pp.360- 366

Harris 2019 Harris, L., ‘Shaikh Muhammad Amir of Karraya and Yellapah of Vellor’, in Dalrymple, W. (ed.), *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company,* London, 2019, pp. 146-137

Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd 1973 Hartnoll and Eyre Ltd, Emily Eden in India, 1836-1842, Catalogue 29, London, 1973

Hermitage 1909 *Archives of the State Hermitage 1909*, Fund I, Inventory, V-1909

Hickman and Enerlein 1979 Hickman, R. and Enderlein, R., *Indische Albumblatte*, Leipzig, 1979

Hillenbrand 1999 Hillenbrand, R., *Islamic Art and Architecture*, London, 1999

Hobhouse Ltd 1986 Hobhouse Ltd, *Indian Painting during the British Period,* London, 1986

Hurel 2010 Hurel, R., Miniature et Peintres Indiennes, Bibliothèque Nationale de *France, vol. 1, Paris, 2010*

Imbert 2015 Imbert, I., La peinture de fleurs persane et indienne de la période *moderne (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles), PhD thesis, Sorbonne, Paris, 2015*

Irwin 1974 Irwin, J. The Kashmir Shawl. London, 1974.

Ivanova, Grek and Akimushkin 1962 Ivanova, A.A., Grek, T.V. and Akimushkin, O.F., *Al'bom Indiiskikh I Persidskikh Miniatur XV- XVIIIvv.,* Moscow, 1962

Jahangir 1968 *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri or Memoirs of Jahangir,* Rogers, A. (tr.), Beveridge, Henry (ed.), Delhi, 2nd edition, 1968

Jahangirnama 1999 *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India,* Thackston, Wheeler (tr.), New York and Washington, DC., 1999

James 1988 James, D., ‘Islamic Calligraphy: An Outline’, in *Islamic Calligraphy*, exhibition catalogue, Geneva, 1988

Karimzadeh Tabrizi 1990 Karimzadeh Tabrizi, M.A., *The Lives and Art of the Old Painters of Iran*, London, 1990, vol. 2

Kaye 1980 Kaye, M.M. (ed.), *The Golden Calm. An English Lady's Life in Mughal Delhi*, Exeter, 1980

Kevorkian 2008 Kevorkian, A.M., ‘Les Très Riches Heures de L'Aga Khan’, Connaissance des Arts, No. 372

Khanam 2009 Khanam, Z., *Birds and Animals in Mughal Miniature Painting*, New Delhi, 2009

Kuhnel 1938-9 Kuhnel, E., ‘History of Miniature Painting and Drawing’, in Upham Pope, A. and Ackerman, P.(eds.), A Survey of Persian Art, vol.3, Oxford, 1938-9

Kuhnel 1942 Kuhnel, E., 'Der Maler Mu'in', Pantheon, vol. 29, 1942

Kuntz 2008 Kuntz, J., *Switzerland, How an Alpine pass became a country*, Geneva, 2008

Kwiatkowski 2019 Kwiatkowski, W., *Legacy of the Masters,* London, 2019

Lafont 2012 Lafont, J.M., 'Delhi Under Shah Alam II and the French', in Dalrymple, W. and Sharma, Y. (eds.), *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi*, 1707- 1857, New York, New Haven and London, 2012

Leach 1992 Leach, L.Y., *Paintings from India. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art*, Vol.VIII, 1992

Le Bruyn 1759 Le Bruyn, C. *Travels into Muscovy, Persia, and divers parts of the East Indies,* London, 1759

Le Strange 1926 Le Strange, G., *Don Juan of Persia: a Shi'ah Catholic,* New York, 1926

Lévi-Strauss 1987 Lévi-Strauss, M. The Cashmere Shawl. London, 1987

London 1931 *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1931

Losty 2002 Losty, J., 'Towards a New Naturalism, Portraiture in Murshidabad and Avadh, 1750-80', in Schmitz, Barbara (ed.), *After the Great Mughals, Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th Century*, Marg, Mumbai, vol. 53, No. 4, June 2002

Losty 2010 Losty, J., *Indian Miniatures from the James Ivory Collection,* London, 2010

Losty 2014 Losty, J., 'James Skinner's *Tazkirat al-Umara* now digitised', *British Library Asian and African Studies Blog*, London, 7 August 2014

Lowry and Beach, 1990. Lowry, G. D. and Beach, M. C. *An annotated and illustrated checklist of the Vever Collection,* Washington D.C., 1990

Makariou 2007 Makariou, S. (ed.), Chefs-d'oeuvre islamiques de l'Aga Khan Museum, Paris, 2007

Makariou 2012 Makariou, S. (ed.), *Islamic Art at the Musée du Louvre,* Paris, 2012

Mallinson 2013 Mallinson, J., 'Yogis in Mughal India', in Diamond, D. (ed.), *Yoga, The Art of Transformation,* Washington, DC, 2013, pp.69-84

Markel 2015 Markel, S., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow,* Los Angeles, 2015

Martin 1912 Martin, F.R., *The Miniature Painters and Paintings of Persia, India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th Century*, London, 1912, vol. 2

Mason 2001 Mason, D. (ed.), *Intimate Worlds, Indian Paintings from the Alvin O. Bellak Collection,* Philadelphia, 2001

Mayer 1999 Mayer, L.A., *Saracenic Heraldry*, Oxford, 1999 reprint

McBurney 2014 McBurney, N.G., *The 1836 Tazkirat al-umara of Colonel Skinner.* London, 2014

McInerney 2019 McInerney, T., 'The patronage of Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh and the work and influence of his principal court artists', *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2019, pp.51-99

McWilliams 2004 McWilliams, M., 'Figures from the Annunciation', in Welch, S.C. and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart, and Hand,* New Haven and London, 2004, pp.68-71

Melikian-Chirvani 2007 Melikian-Chirvani, A.S., Le Chante du Monde, L'Art de l'Iran *safavide 1501-1736, Paris, 2007*

Meyer 2002 Meyer, H., Pferde anders aufgezäumt streifzüge durch die Natur *und Kunstgeschichte, Berlin, 2002*

Michell and Zebrowski 1999 Michell, G. and Zebrowski, M., *The New Cambridge History of India, 1:7, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, Cambridge, 1999

Milton 1982 Milton, B., *Company Painting, a century of Indian art for European patrons, 1770-1870,* Eyre and Hobhouse exhibition catalogue, London, 1982

Moorcroft 1823 Moorcroft, T. *Treatise on Shawls and Shawl Wool.* British Library, MSS Eur. E113

Ahmad 1959 Ahmad, Q., *Calligrapher and Painters, A Treatise by Qadi Ahmad, son of Mir Munshi (circa A.H. 1015/A.D. 1606)',* Minorsky, V. (tr.), Freer Gallery of Art Occasional Papers, Vol. 3, No. 2, Washington, 1959

Munby 1961-60 Munby, A.N.L., *Phillipps Studies,* Cambridge, 1951-1960

Munby 1967 Munby, A. N. L., *Portrait of an Obsession: The Life of Sir Thomas Phillipps, the World's Greatest Book Collector,* New York, 1967

Murphy 1988 Murphy, V., *Kashmir Shawls, Woven Art & Cultural Document*, Kyburg Ltd, London, 1988

Nath 1994 Nath, R., *History of Mughal Architecture, vol. Ill,* New Delhi, 1994

Nayar 2025 Nayar, V., *Interior Worlds: The Legacy of Studio Photography in India,* MAP Academy, 8 May 2024, accessed 30 August 2025

Nevile 1996 Nevile, P., *Nautch Girls of India, Dancers, Singers, Playmates*, New Delhi, 1996

Nevile 2004 Nevile, P., *Stories from the Raj, Sahibs, Memsahibs and Others*, New Delhi, 2004

Nevile 2007 Nevile, P., *The Marvels of Indian Painting: Rise and Demise of Company School,* Gurgaon, 2007

Octagon 1979 Octagon*, A Quarterly Journal for Discerning Collections*, No. 16, 1979

Okada 1989 Okada, A., *Miniatures de l'Inde impériale,* Paris, 1989

Okada 1991 Okada, A., 'Basawan', in Pal, Pratapaditya (ed.), *Master Artists of the Imperial Mughal Court,* Marg, Mumbai, 1991

Okada 1992 Okada, A., *Indian Miniatures of the Mughal Court,* Paris and New York, 1992

Pal 1989 Pal, P. et al., *The Romance of the Taj Mahal*, Los Angeles and London, 1989

Palliser 1867 Palliser, B., 'Textile Fabrics', in *The Illustrated Catalogue of the Universal Exhibition published with the Art Journal,* London, 1867

Paris 1867 *L'Exposition Universelle de 1867 Illustrée: publication internationale authorisée par la Commission Imperiale, Paris, 1867*

Paris 1986 *Miniatures Indiennes et Persanes de la Fondation Custodia (Coll. F. Lugt), Paris, 1986*

Parodi and Wannell 2011 Parodi, L. and Wannell, B., 'The Earliest Datable Mughal Painting', asianart.com online journal, 2011

Parodi 2018a Parodi, L., 'Shah Abu Ma'ali, Mir Sayyid Ali and the Sayyids of Tirmiz', *Muqarnas*, vol. 35, 2018, pp. 125-43

Parodi 2018b Parodi, L., 'Tracing the Rise of Mughal Portraiture', in Branfoot, C. (ed.), *Portraiture in South Asia since the Mughals,* London, 2018

Patnaik and Welch 1985 Patnaik, N. and Welch, S.C., *A Second Paradise,* 1985

Peck 2013 Peck, A. (ed.), *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013.*

Phillips 2016 Phillips, A., *Everyday Luxuries, Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople 1600-1800, Connecting Art Histories in the Museum*, vol. 2. Dortmund, 2016

Piotrovsky and Vrieze 1999 Piotrovsky, M.B. and Vrieze, J.(ed.), *Art of Islam. Heavenly art. Earthly Beauty*, exhibition catalogue, Amsterdam, 1999

Powell 1872 Powell, B. H. *Handbook of the Manufactures and Arts of the Punjab.* Vol. II. Lahore, 1872

Quaritch and Co 1935 Quaritch and Co., London, Sale Catalogue No. 512, 1935

Qureshi de Unger 2022 Qureshi de Unger, A., *The Hunt as Metaphor in Mughal Painting*, Artibus Asiae Supplementum, Zurich, 2022

Rabino 1916-17 Rabino, H.L., 'Les provinces caspiennes de la Perse, le Guîlân', Revue *du Monde Musulman, vol. XXXII, Paris, 1916-17*

Randhawa 1962 Randhawa, M.S., Kangra Paintings on Love, New Delhi, 1962

Ray 2015 Ray, S., *Indian and Islamic Works of Art,* London, 2015

Relia 2013 Relia, A., *The Indian Portrait II, Sacred Journey of Tilkayat Govardhanlalji,* Ahmedabad, 2013

Rendlova 2015 Rendlova, K., 'Portrait of Hakim Shafa'i from the Collections of the National Gallery in Prague in the Context of the Work of Riza-yi Abbasi, his Workshop and Epigones', Bulletin of the National Gallery in Prague, XXV /2015, pp. 78-9

Richard 1997 Richard, F., Spendeurs Persanes, Manuscrits du XII au XVII siècle, Paris, 1997

Robinson 1953 Robinson, B.W., *The Kevorkian Collection: Islamic and Indian Illustrated Manuscripts, Miniatures and Drawings*, unpublished manuscript, New York, 1953

Robinson 1967 Robinson, B.W., *Persian Miniatures from Collections in the British Isles*, London, 1967, cat.no.94, p.78

Robinson 2007 Robinson, B.W. and Sims, E., *The Windsor Shahnama of 1648*, London, 2007

Rogers 1995 Rogers, J. M., *Empire of the Sultans. Ottoman art from the collection of Nasser D. Khalili,* exhibition catalogue, Geneva, 1995

Rogers 2007 Rogers, J. M., *The Arts of Islam, Treasures from the Nasser D Khalili Collections*, Sydney, 2007

Roy 2009 Roy, M., *Idiosyncrasies in the Late Mughal Painting Tradition: The Artist Mihr Chand, Son of Ganga Ram (fl. 1759-86),* PhD Thesis, SOAS University of London, 2009

Roy 2010 Roy, M., 'Origins of the Late Mughal Painting Tradition in Awadh', in Markel, Stephen and Gude, Tushara Bindu (eds.), *The Art of Courtly Lucknow, India's Fabled City*, Los Angeles, 2010

Safrani 1984 Safrani, S.H., 'The Arts of the Islamic Book: The Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan', *Arts of Asia*, vol. 14, No. 6, 1984

Sabahi 1991 Sabahi, T., *Cavalieri d'Oriente,* Milan, 1991

Scarce 2013 Scarce, J.M., 'Safavid Dress and Europe', in Langer, E.(ed.), *The Fascination of Persia,* Zurich, 2013

Schmitz 2007 Schmitz, B. and Desai, Z.A., *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur,* New Delhi, 2007

Schofield 2023 Schofield, K.B., *Music and Musicians in Late Mughal India: Histories of the Ephemeral, 1748-1858*, Cambridge, 2023

Schwartz 2013 Schwartz, G., 'Between Court and Company: Dutch Artists in Persia', in Langer, A. (ed.), *The Fascination of Persia,* Zurich, 2013

Sen 1982 Sen, G., 'An unpublished study of a *Sadhu* by Basawan and its relation to other drawings', *Lalit Kala*, no.20, 1982, pp.24-8

Seyller 1997 Seyller, J., 'The Inspection and Valuation of Manuscripts in the Imperial Mughal Library', *Artibus Asiae*, Vol.LVII, 3/4, 1997

Seyller 2011a Seyller, J., 'Basawan'in Beach, Milo Cleveland Fischer, Eberhard and Goswamy, Brijinder Nath (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting,* Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, I /11, Zurich, 2011

Seyller 2011b Seyller, J., 'Muhammad Ali', in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E. and Goswamy, B.N. (eds.), *Masters of Indian Painting,* Artibus Asiae Supplementum 48, I /11, Zurich, 2011

Shaffer and Sharma 2024 Shaffer, H.and Sharma, Y., 'To Fill 'a Gap in Indian History', An Archival Reckoning with the Term Company Painting'*, Archives of Asian Art,* 74:1, April 2024, pp.79-128

Sharar 1975 Sharar, A.H., *Lucknow, The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture,* Harcourt, E.S. and Khan, F. (tr. and ed.), London, 1975

Sharma 2022 Sharma, Y., 'The Intermedial Gaze and the Nautch Girls of the Fraser Album' in Garimella, A. (ed.), *The Long Arc of South Asian Art: A Reader in Honour of Vidya Dehejia*, London/New Delhi, 2022

Sims 1996 Sims, E., 'Mu'in', *The Grove Dictionary of Art*, London, 1996, vol. 22, p.266

Skelton 1972 Skelton, R., 'A Decorative motif in Mughal Art', in Pal, P. (ed.), *Aspects of Indian Art: Papers presented in a Symposium at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, October 1970*, Leiden, 1972, pp.147-52

Skelton 1982 Skelton, R., *The Indian Heritage: Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule*, London, 1982

Skelton 1994 Skelton, R., 'Iranian Artists in the Service of Humayun', in Canby, S. (ed.), Humayun's Garden Party, Marg, Mumbai, 1994

Soni and Relia 2016 Soni, S. and Relia, A., *The Indian Portrait VIII, RAJPUTANA NAYAK, Paintings from the Royal Courts of Rajasthan, 1660- 1940 CE,* Ahmedabad, 2016

Soudavar 1992 Soudavar, A., *Art of the Persian Courts*, New York, 1992

Soudavar 1999 Soudavar, A., 'Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition', *Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, vol. XXXVII, 1999

Soustiel and David 1984 Soustiel, J. and David, M.C., Art Ottoman: Objets *d'art de l'Islam - Centenaire de la Maison Soustiel 1883-1983, Galerie* Soustiel, Paris, 1984

Soustiel and David 1986 Soustiel, J. and David, M.C., *Miniatures Orientale de l'Inde*, 4, Paris, 1986

Spear 1951 Spear, P., *Twilight of the Mughuls,* Cambridge, 1951

Spink and Son 1982 Spink and Son, Two Thousand Years of Indian Art, London, 1982

Stchoukine 1935 Stchoukine, I., 'Portraits moghols: IV La Collection du Baron Maurice de Rothschild', Revue des Arts Asiatiques, vol, 9, No. 4, December 1935

Stchoukine 1964 Stchoukine, I., Les peintures des manuscrits de Shah Abbas Ier à *la fin des Safavis, Paris, 1964*

Stronge 2002 Stronge, S., Painting for the Mughal Emperor, London, 2002

Stronge and Atighi-Moghaddam, 2018 Stronge, S.and Atighi-Moghaddam, B., 'An Unrecorded Polier Muraqqa' (c. 1785): New Insights into British-Hindustani Cultural Interaction', in *Adle Nāmeh Studies in Memory of Chahriyar Adle Alireza Anisi,* Tehran, 2018, pp.195–228.

Stronge 2024 Stronge, S.(ed.), *The Great Mughals. Art, Architecture and Opulence*, exhibition catalogue, London, 2024

Subrahmanyan 2000 Subrahmanyan, S., 'The Career of Colonel Polier and Late Eighteenth-Century Orientalism', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Third* Series, Vol. 10, No. 1, April 2000, pp.43-60

Swietechowski and Babaie 1989 Swietechowski, M.L. and Babaie, S., *Persian Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum*, New York, 1989

Paris 1622 *Theatrum Florae: in quo ex toto orbe selecti mirabiles, venustiores ac praecipui flores tanquam ab ipsus deae sinu proferuntur,* ill. Daniel Rabel, published by Nic. de Mathonière, Paris, 1622.

The Ismaili 2002 'The Rediscovery of our Cultural Heritage', *The Ismaili USA Magazine,* Nowrouz edition, March 2002

Topsfield 1984/5 Topsfield, A., 'Ketelaar's Embassy and the Farangi Theme in the Art of Udaipur', *Oriental Art*, London, Winter 1984/85, pp.348-367

Topsfield 2000 Topsfield, A., *Court Painting in Rajasthan*, Mumbai, 2000

Topsfield 2004 Topsfield, A. (ed.), 'Arts of India', in *In the Realm of Gods and Kings*. London and New York, 2004

Topsfield 2021 Topsfield, A., *Art of India and Beyond,* Oxford, 2021

Topsfield and Mittal 2015 Topsfield, A. and Mittal, J., *Rajasthani Drawings in the Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art,* Hyderabad, 2015

Verma 1994 Verma, S.P., *Mughal Painters and their Work,* Delhi, 1994

Verma 1999 Verma, S.P., 'Flower Painting at Jahangir and Shah Jahan's Studios', in *Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art,* Marg, Vol.50, No.3, Mumbai, March 1999

Veyrassat 2023 Veyrassat, B., De l'attirance à l'expérience de l'Inde, Neuchâtel, 2023

Vigne, 1847 Vigne, T. *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo, the countries adjoining the mountain-course of the Indus, and the Himalaya, north of the Panjab.* Vol. I. London, 1842.

von Gladiss 2010 von Gladiss, A., Albumblatter. Miniaturen aus den Sammlungen *indo-islamische Herrscherhofe, Berlin, 2010*

Watson 1974 Watson, F., *A Concise History of India,* London, 1974, reprinted 1979 and 1985

Webster 2011 Webster, M., *Johan Zoffany, 1733-1810*, New Haven and London, 2011

Welch, A. 1972-8 Welch, A., *Collection of Islamic Art: Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan*, Geneva, 4 vols., 1972-1978

Welch, A. 1973 Welch, A, *Shah Abbas and the Arts of Isfahan*, New York, 1973

Welch, A. 1976 Welch, A., *Artists for the Shah, Late Sixteenth-Century Painting at the Imperial Court of Iran*, New Haven and London, 1976

Welch, A. 1979 Welch, A., *Calligraphy in the Arts of the Muslim World*, New York and Austin, 1979

Welch, A. and Welch. S, 1982 Welch, A., and Welch, S.C., A*rts of the Islamic Book: the Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan,* Ithaca, 1982

Welch, A. 2000 Welch, A., 'Worldly and Otherwordly Love in Safavi painting', in Hillenbrand, R. (ed.), *Persian Paintings from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in honour of Basil W. Robinson,* London, 2000

Welch, S. 1961 Welch, S.C., 'The Paintings of Basawan', *Lalit Kala,* no. 10, New Delhi, 1961, pp.7-17

Welch, S. 1965 Welch, S.C. and Beach, Milo Cleveland, *Gods, Thrones and Peacocks. North Indian Painting from Two Traditions: Mughal and Rajput, Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries,* New York, 1965

Welch, S. 1976 Welch, S.C., *Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*, New York, 1976

Welch, S. 1978 Welch, S.C., *Room for Wonder: Indian Painting during the British Period, 1760-1880,* New York, 1978

Welch, S. 1979 Welch, S.C., *Wonders of the Age, Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting*, Cambridge, MA., 1979

Welch, S. 1983 Welch, S.C., *The Art of Mughal India: Painting & Precious Objects,* New York, 1983.

Welch, S. 1985 Welch, S.C., *India! Art and Culture 1300-1900,* exhibition catalogue, New York, 1985

Welch, S. 1987 Welch, S.C., *The Emperor's Album: Images of Mughal India,* New York, 1987

Welch, S. 1992 Welch, S.C., 'Reflections on Muhammad Ali', in Giese, A. and Buegel, J.C. (eds.), Gott ist schön und Er liebt die Schönheit, Bern, 1992

Welch, S. 1997 Welch S.C., *Gods Thrones and Tigers: The Art of Kotah,* New Jersey, 1997

Wiet 1933 Wiet, G., L'exposition persane de 1931 (à Londres), Cairo, 1933

Wright 2008 Wright, E., *Muraqqa'. Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library,* Alexandria VA, 2008

Zebrowski 1983 Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting,* London, 1983

Ziad 2002 Ziad, Z., *The Magnificent Mughals,* Oxford and Karachi, 2002

Zygulski 1989 Zygulski, Z., *Sztuka islamu w zbiorach polskich,* Warsaw, 1989

CONDITIONS OF SALE • BUYING AT CHRISTIE'S

CONDITIONS OF SALE

These Conditions of Sale and the Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice set out the terms on which we offer the lots listed in this catalogue for sale. By registering to bid and/or by bidding at auction you agree to these terms, so you should read them carefully before doing so. You will find a glossary at the end explaining the meaning of the words and expressions coloured in bold. As well as these Conditions of Sale, lots in which we offer Non-Fungible Tokens for sale are governed by the Additional Conditions of Sale – Non-Fungible Tokens, which can be found at Appendix A to these Conditions of Sale. For the sale of Non-Fungible Tokens, to the extent there is a conflict between the "London Conditions of Sale Buying at Christie's" and "Additional Conditions of Sale – Non-Fungible Tokens", the latter controls.

Unless we own a **lot** (Δ symbol), Christie's acts as agent for the seller. This means that we are providing services to the seller to help them sell their lot and that Christie's is concluding the contract for the sale of the lot on behalf of the seller. When Christie's is the agent of the seller, the contract of sale which is created by any successful bid by you for a lot will be directly between you and the seller, and not between you and Christie's.

A • BEFORE THE SALE

1 • DESCRIPTION OF LOTS

(a) Certain words used in the **catalogue description** have special meanings. You can find details of these on the page headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice' which forms part of these terms. You can find a key to the Symbols found next to certain catalogue entries under the section of the catalogue called 'Symbols Used in this Catalogue'.

(b) Our description of any **lot** in the catalogue, any **condition** report and any other statement made by us (whether orally or in writing) about any **lot**, including about its nature or **condition**, artist, period, materials, approximate dimensions or **provenance** are our opinion and not to be relied upon as a statement of fact. We do not carry out in-depth research of the sort carried out by professional historians and scholars. All dimensions and weights are approximate only.

2 • OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR DESCRIPTION OF LOTS

We do not provide any guarantee in relation to the nature of a **lot** apart from our **authenticity warranty** contained in paragraph E2 and to the extent provided in paragraph I below.

3 • CONDITION

(a) The **condition** of **lots** sold in our auctions can vary widely due to factors such as age, previous damage, restoration, repair and wear and tear. Their nature means that they will rarely be in perfect **condition**. **Lots** are sold 'as is', in the **condition** they are in at the time of the sale, without any representation or **warranty** or assumption of liability of any kind as to **condition** by Christie's or by the seller.

(b) Any reference to **condition** in a catalogue entry or in a **condition** report will not amount to a full description of **condition**, and images may not show a **lot** clearly. Colours and shades may look different in print or on screen to how they look on physical inspection. **Condition** reports may be available to help you evaluate the **condition** of a **lot**. **Condition** reports are provided free of charge as a convenience to our buyers and are for guidance only. They offer our opinion but they may not refer to all faults, inherent defects, restoration, alteration or adaptation because our staff are not professional restorers or conservators. For that reason they are not an alternative to examining a **lot** in person or taking your own professional advice. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have requested, received and considered any **condition** report.

4 • VIEWING LOTS PRE-AUCTION

(a) If you are planning to bid on a **lot**, you should inspect it personally or through a knowledgeable representative before you make a bid to make sure that you accept the description and its **condition**. We recommend you get your own advice from a restorer or other professional adviser.

(b) Pre-auction viewings are open to the public free of charge. Our specialists may be available to answer questions at pre-auction viewings or by appointment.

5 • ESTIMATES

Estimates are based on the **condition**, rarity, quality and **provenance** of the **lots** and on prices recently paid at auction for similar property. **Estimates** can change. Neither you, nor anyone else, may rely on any **estimates** as a prediction or guarantee of the actual selling price of a **lot** or its value for any other purpose. **Estimates** do not include the **buyer's premium** or any applicable taxes.

6 • WITHDRAWAL

Christie's may, at its option, withdraw any **lot** at any time prior to or during the sale of the **lot**. Christie's has no liability to you for any decision to withdraw.

7 • JEWELLERY

(a) Coloured gemstones (such as rubies, sapphires and emeralds) may have been treated to improve their look, through methods such as heating and oiling. These methods are accepted by the international jewellery trade but may make the gemstone less strong and/or require special care over time.

(b) It will not be apparent to us whether a diamond is naturally or synthetically formed unless it has been tested by a gemmological laboratory. Where the diamond has been tested, a gemmological report will be available.

(c) All types of gemstones may have been improved by some method. You may request a gemmological report for any item which does not have a report if the request is made to us at least three weeks before the date of the auction and you pay the fee for the report.

(d) Certain weights in the **catalogue description** are provided for guidance purposes only as they have been estimated through measurement and, as such, should not be relied upon as exact.

(e) We do not obtain a gemmological report for every gemstone sold in our auctions. Where we do get gemmological reports from internationally accepted gemmological laboratories, such reports will be described in the catalogue. Reports from American gemmological laboratories will describe any improvement or treatment to the gemstone. Reports from European gemmological laboratories will describe any improvement or treatment only if we request that they do so, but will confirm when no improvement or treatment has been made. Because of differences in approach and technology, laboratories may not agree whether a particular gemstone has been treated, the amount of treatment or whether treatment is permanent. The gemmological laboratories will only report on the improvements or treatments known to the laboratories at the date of the report. We do not guarantee nor are we responsible for any report or certificate from a gemmological laboratory that may accompany a **lot**.

(f) For jewellery sales, **estimates** are based on the information in any gemmological report or, if no report is available, assume that the gemstones may have been treated or enhanced.

8 • WATCHES & CLOCKS

(a) Almost all clocks and watches are repaired in their lifetime and may include parts which are not original. We do not give a **warranty** that any individual component part of any watch or clock is **authentic**. Watchbands described as 'associated' are not part of the original watch and may not be **authentic**. Clocks may be sold without pendulums, weights or keys.

(b) As collectors' watches and clocks often have very fine and complex mechanisms, a general service, change of battery or further repair work may be necessary, for which you are responsible. We do not give a **warranty** that any watch or clock is in good working order. Certificates are not available unless described in the catalogue.

(c) Most watches have been opened to find out the type and quality of movement. For that reason, watches with water resistant cases may not be waterproof and we recommend you have them checked by a competent watchmaker before use. Important information about the sale, transport and shipping of watches and watchbands can be found in paragraph H2(g).

B • REGISTERING TO BID

1 • NEW BIDDERS

(a) If this is your first time bidding at Christie's or you are a returning bidder who has not bought anything from any of our salerooms within the last two years you must register at least 48 hours before an auction to give us enough time to process and approve your registration. We may, at our option, decline to permit you to register as a bidder. You will be asked for the following:

(i) for individuals: Photo identification (driving licence, national identity card or passport) and, if not shown on the ID document, proof of your current address (for example, a current utility bill or bank statement).

(ii) for corporate clients: Your Certificate of Incorporation or equivalent document(s) showing your name and registered address together with documentary proof of directors and beneficial owners; and

(iii) for trusts, partnerships, offshore companies and other business structures, please contact us in advance to discuss our requirements.

(b) We may also ask you to give us a financial reference and/or a deposit as a condition of allowing you to bid. For help, please contact our Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

2 • RETURNING BIDDERS

We may at our option ask you for current identification as described in paragraph B1(a) above, a financial reference or a deposit as a condition of allowing you to bid. If you have not bought anything from any of our salerooms in the last two years or if you want to spend more than on previous occasions, please contact our Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

3 • IF YOU FAIL TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT DOCUMENTS

If in our opinion you do not satisfy our bidder identification and registration procedures including, but not limited to completing any anti-money laundering and/or anti-terrorism financing checks we may require to our satisfaction, we may refuse to register you to bid, and if you make a successful bid, we may cancel the contract for sale between you and the seller.

4 • BIDDING ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER PERSON

(a) As authorised bidder. If you are bidding on behalf of another person who will pay Christie's directly, that person will need to complete the registration requirements above before you can bid, and supply a signed letter authorising you to bid for them.

(b) As agent for a principal: If you register in your own name but are acting as agent for someone else (the "ultimate buyer(s)") who will put you in funds before you pay us, you accept personal liability to pay the **purchase price** and all other sums due. We will require you to disclose the identity of the ultimate buyer(s) and may require you to provide documents to verify their identity in accordance with paragraph E3(b).

5 • BIDDING IN PERSON

If you wish to bid in the saleroom you must register for a numbered bidding paddle at least 30 minutes before the auction. You may register online at www.christies.com or in person. For help, please contact the Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

6 • BIDDING SERVICES

The bidding services described below are a free service offered as a convenience to our clients and Christie's is not responsible for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in providing these services.

(a) **Phone Bids**

Your request for this service must be made no later than 24 hours prior to the auction. We will accept bids by telephone for **lot**s only if our staff are available to take the bids. If you need to bid in a language other than in English, you must arrange this well before the auction. We may record telephone bids. By bidding on the telephone, you are agreeing to us recording your conversations. You also agree that your telephone bids are governed by these Conditions of Sale.

(b) **Internet Bids on Christie's LIVE™**

For certain auctions we will accept bids over the Internet. For more information, please visit www.christies.com/register-and-bid. As well as these Conditions of Sale, internet bids are governed by the Christie's LIVE™ Terms of Use which are available at www.christies.com/christies-live-terms.

c) **Written Bids**

You can find a Written Bid Form at any Christie's office or by choosing the sale and viewing the **lot**s online at www.christies.com. We must receive your completed Written Bid at least 24 hours before the auction. Bids must be placed in the currency of the saleroom. The **auctioneer** will take reasonable steps to carry out written bids at the lowest possible price, taking into account the **reserve**. If you make a written bid on a **lot** which does not have a **reserve** and there is no higher bid than yours, we will bid on your behalf at around 50% of the **low estimate** or, if lower, the amount of your bid. If we receive written bids on a **lot** for identical amounts, and at the auction these are the highest bids on the **lot**, we will sell the **lot** to the bidder whose written bid we received first.

C • CONDUCTING THE SALE

1 • WHO CAN ENTER THE AUCTION

We may, at our option, refuse admission to our premises or decline to permit participation in any auction or to reject any bid.

2 • RESERVES

Unless otherwise indicated, all **lots** are subject to a **reserve**. We identify **lots** that are offered without **reserve** with the symbol • next to the **lot** number. The **reserve** cannot be more than the **lot's low estimate**, unless the **lot** is subject to a third party guarantee and the irrevocable bid exceeds the printed **low estimate**. In that case, the **reserve** will be set at the amount of the irrevocable bid. **Lots** which are subject to a third party guarantee arrangement are identified in the catalogue with the symbol º♦.

3 • AUCTIONEER'S DISCRETION

The **auctioneer** can at their sole option:

(a) refuse any bid;

(b) move the bidding backwards or forwards in any way they may decide, or change the order of the **lots**;

(c) withdraw any **lot**;

(d) divide any **lot** or combine any two or more **lots**;

(e) reopen or continue the bidding even after the hammer has fallen; and

(f) in the case of error or dispute related to bidding and whether during or after the auction, to continue the bidding, determine the successful bidder, cancel the sale of the **lot**, or reoffer and resell any **lot**. If you believe that the **auctioneer** has accepted the successful bid in error, you must provide a written notice detailing your claim within 3 business days of the date of the auction. The **auctioneer** will consider such claim in good faith. If the **auctioneer**, in the exercise of their discretion under this paragraph, decides after the auction is complete, to cancel the sale of a **lot**, or reoffer and resell a **lot**, they will notify the successful bidder no later than by the end of the 7th calendar day following the date of the auction. The **auctioneer**'s decision in exercise of this discretion is final. This paragraph does not in any way prejudice Christie's ability to cancel the sale of a **lot** under any other applicable provision of these Conditions of Sale, including the rights of cancellation set forth in section B(3), E(2)(i), F(4) and J(1).

4 • BIDDING

The **auctioneer** accepts bids from:

(a) bidders in the saleroom;

(b) telephone bidders, and internet bidders through 'Christie's LIVE™ (as shown above in Section B6); and

(c) written bids (also known as absentee bids or commission bids) left with us by a bidder before the auction.

5 • BIDDING ON BEHALF OF THE SELLER

The **auctioneer** may, at their sole option, bid on behalf of the seller up to but not including the amount of the **reserve** either by making consecutive bids or by making bids in response to other bidders. The **auctioneer** will not identify these as bids made on behalf of the seller and will not make any bid on behalf of the seller at or above the **reserve**. If **lots** are offered without **reserve**, the **auctioneer** will generally decide to open the bidding at 50% of the **low estimate** for the **lot**. If no bid is made at that level, the **auctioneer** may decide to go backwards at their sole option until a bid is made, and then continue up from that amount. In the event that there are no bids on a **lot**, the **auctioneer** may deem such **lot** unsold.

6 • BID INCREMENTS

Bidding generally starts below the **low estimate** and increases in steps (bid increments). The **auctioneer** will decide at their sole option where the bidding should start and the bid increments.

7 • CURRENCY CONVERTER

The saleroom video screens (and Christies LIVE™) may show bids in some other major currencies as well as sterling. Any conversion is for guidance only and we cannot be bound by any rate of exchange used. Christie's is not responsible for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in providing these services.

8 • SUCCESSFUL BIDS

Unless the **auctioneer** decides to use their discretion as set out in paragraph C3 above, when the **auctioneer**'s hammer strikes, we have accepted the last bid. This means a contract for sale has been formed between the seller and the successful bidder. We will issue an invoice only to the registered bidder who made the successful bid. While we send out invoices by post and/or email after the auction, we do not accept responsibility for telling you whether or not your bid was successful. If you have bid by written bid, you should contact us by telephone or in person as soon as possible after the auction to get details of the outcome of your bid to avoid having to pay unnecessary storage charges.

9 • LOCAL BIDDING LAWS

You agree that when bidding in any of our sales that you will strictly comply with all local laws and regulations in force at the time of the sale for the relevant sale site.

D • THE BUYER'S PREMIUM, TAXES AND ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

1 • THE BUYER'S PREMIUM

In addition to the **hammer price**, the successful bidder agrees to pay us a **buyer's premium** on the **hammer price** of each **lot** sold. On all **lots** we charge 27% of the **hammer price** up to and including £1,000,000, 22% on that part of the **hammer price** over £1,000,000 and up to and including £6,000,000, and 15% of that part of the **hammer price** above £6,000,000. VAT will be added to the **buyer's premium** and is payable by you. For lots offered under the VAT Margin Scheme or Temporary Admission VAT rules, the VAT may not be shown separately on our invoice because of tax laws. You may be eligible to have a VAT refund in certain circumstances if the **lot** is exported. Please see the "VAT refunds: what can I reclaim?" section of 'VAT Symbols and Explanation' for further information.

2 • TAXES

The successful bidder is responsible for all applicable tax including any VAT, GST, sales or compensating use tax or equivalent tax wherever such taxes may arise on the **hammer price** and the **buyer's premium**. VAT charges and refunds depend on the particular circumstances of the buyer. It is the buyer's responsibility to ascertain and pay all taxes due. VAT is payable on the **buyer's premium** and, for some **lots**, VAT is payable on the **hammer price**. Following the departure of the UK from the EU (Brexit), UK VAT and Customs rules will apply only.

For **lots** Christie's ships or delivers to the United States, sales or use tax may be due on the **hammer price**, **buyer's premium** and/or any other charges related to the **lot**, regardless of the nationality or citizenship of the purchaser. Christie's will collect sales tax where legally required. The applicable sales tax rate will be determined based upon the state, county, or locale to which the **lot** will be shipped or delivered. Successful bidders claiming an exemption from sales tax must provide appropriate documentation to Christie's prior to the release of the **lot.** For shipments/deliveries to those states for which Christie's is not required to collect sales tax, a successful bidder may be required to remit use tax to that state's taxing authorities. Christie's recommends you obtain your own independent tax advice with further questions.

For **lots** Christie's ships or delivers to Jersey (Channel Islands), GST at a rate of 5% will be due on the **hammer price, buyer's premium**, freight charges (as set out on your Shipping Quote Acceptance Form) and any applicable customs duty. Christie's will collect GST from you, where legally required to do so.

For **lots** purchased by a successful bidder with a registered address in India and who has bid via Christie's LIVE™, an Indian Equalisation Levy Tax at a rate of 2% will be due on the **hammer price** and **buyer's premium** (exclusive of any applicable VAT**).** Christie's will collect the Indian Equalisation Levy Tax from you, where required to do so.

3 • ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

In certain countries, local laws entitle the artist or the artist's estate to a royalty known as 'artist's resale right' when any **lot** created by the artist is sold. We identify these **lots** with the λ symbol next to the **lot** number. If these laws apply to a **lot,** you must pay us an extra amount equal to the royalty. We will pay the royalty to the appropriate authority on the seller's behalf.

The artist's resale royalty applies if the **hammer price** of the **lot** is 1,000 GBP or more if located in the United Kingdom at the time of sale. The total royalty for any **lot** cannot be more than 12,500 GBP. We work out the amount owed as follows:

Royalty for the portion of the **hammer price** *(in Pounds Sterling)*
4% up to 50,000
3% between 50,000.01 and 200,000
1% between 200,000.01 and 350,000
0.50% between 350,000.01 and 500,000
over 500,000, the lower of 0.25% and 12,500 GBP.

E • WARRANTIES

1 • SELLER'S WARRANTIES

For each **lot**, the seller gives a **warranty** that the seller:

(a) is the owner of the **lot** or a joint owner of the **lot** acting with the permission of the other co-owners or, if the seller is not the owner or a joint owner of the **lot**, has the permission of the owner to sell the **lot**, or the right to do so in law; and

(b) has the right to transfer ownership of the **lot** to the buyer without any restrictions or claims by anyone else.

If one or more of the above **warranties** are incorrect, the seller shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** (as defined in paragraph F1(a) below) paid by you to us. The seller will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, expected savings, loss of opportunity or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses. The seller gives no **warranty** in relation to any **lot** other than as set out above and, as far as the seller is allowed by law, all **warranties** from the seller to you, and all other obligations upon the seller which may be added to this agreement by law, are excluded.

2 • OUR AUTHENTICITY WARRANTY

We warrant, subject to the terms below, that the **lots** in our sales are **authentic** (our '**authenticity warranty'**). If, within five years of the date of the auction, you give notice to us that your **lot** is not **authentic**, subject to the terms below, we will refund the **purchase price** paid by you. The meaning of **authentic** can be found in the glossary at the end of these Conditions of Sale. The terms of the **authenticity warranty** are as follows:

(a) It will be honoured for claims notified within a period of five years from the date of the auction. After such time, we will not be obligated to honour the **authenticity warranty**.

(b) It is given only for information shown in **UPPERCASE type** in the first line of the **catalogue description** (the '**Heading**'). It does not apply to any information other than in the **Heading** even if shown in **UPPERCASE type**.

(c) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply to any **Heading** or part of a **Heading** which is **qualified**. **Qualified** means limited by a clarification in a **lot**'s **catalogue description** or by the use in a **Heading** of one of the terms listed in the section titled **Qualified Heading**s on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'. For example, use of the term 'ATTRIBUTED TO…' in a **Heading** means that the **lot** is in Christie's opinion probably a work by the named artist but no **warranty** is provided that the **lot** is the work of the named artist. Please read the full list of **Qualified Heading**s and a **lot**'s full **catalogue description** before bidding.

(d) The **authenticity warranty** applies to the **Heading** as amended by any **Saleroom notice**.

(e) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply where scholarship has developed since the auction leading to a change in generally accepted opinion. Further, it does not apply if the **Heading** either matched the generally accepted opinion of experts at the date of the sale or drew attention to any conflict of opinion.

(f) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply if the **lot** can only be shown not to be **authentic** by a scientific process which, on the date we published the catalogue, was not available or generally accepted for use, or which was unreasonably expensive or impractical, or which was likely to have damaged the **lot**.

(g) The benefit of the **authenticity warranty** is only available to the original buyer shown on the invoice for the **lot** issued at the time of the sale and only if, on the date of the notice of claim, the original buyer is the full owner of the **lot** and the **lot** is free from any claim, interest or restriction by anyone else. The benefit of this **authenticity warranty** may not be transferred to anyone else.

(h) In order to claim under the **authenticity warranty**, you must:
(i) give us written notice of your claim within five years of the date of the auction. We may require full details and supporting evidence of any such claim;
(ii) at Christie's option, we may require you to provide the written opinions of two recognised experts in the field of the **lot** mutually agreed by you and us in advance confirming that the **lot** is not **authentic**. If we have any doubts, we **reserve** the right to obtain additional opinions at our expense; and
(iii) return the **lot** at your expense to the saleroom from which you bought it in the **condition** it was in at the time of sale.

(i) Your only right under this **authenticity warranty** is to cancel the sale and receive a refund of the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not, in any circumstances, be required to pay you more than the **purchase price** nor will we be liable for any loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses.

(j) **Books**. Where the **lot** is a book, we give an additional **warranty** for 14 days from the date of the sale that if on collation any **lot** is defective in text or illustration, we will refund your **purchase price**, subject to the following terms:

(i) This additional **warranty** does not apply to:

(a) the absence of blanks, half titles, tissue guards or advertisements, damage in respect of bindings, stains, spotting, marginal tears or other defects not affecting completeness of the text or illustration;

(b) drawings, autographs, letters or manuscripts, signed photographs, music, atlases, maps or periodicals;

(c) books not identified by title;

(d) **lots** sold without a printed **estimate**;

(e) books which are described in the catalogue as sold not subject to return; or

(f) defects stated in any **condition** report or announced at the time of sale.

(ii) To make a claim under this paragraph you must give written details of the defect and return the **lot** to the sale room at which you bought it in the same **condition** as at the time of sale, within 14 days of the date of the sale.

(K) **South East Asian Modern and Contemporary Art and Chinese Calligraphy and Painting.**

In these categories, the **authenticity warranty** does not apply because current scholarship does not permit the making of definitive statements. Christie's does, however, agree to cancel a sale in either of these two categories of art where it has been proven the **lot** is a forgery. Christie's will refund to the original buyer the **purchase price** in accordance with the terms of Christie's **authenticity warranty**, provided that the original buyer notifies us with full supporting evidence documenting the forgery claim within twelve (12) months of the date of the auction. Such evidence must be satisfactory to us that the **lot** is a forgery in accordance with paragraph E2(h)(ii) above and the **lot** must be returned to us in accordance with E2h(iii) above. Paragraphs E2(b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) and (i) also apply to a claim under these categories.

(l) **Chinese, Japanese and Korean artefacts (excluding Chinese, Japanese and Korean calligraphy, paintings, prints, drawings and jewellery).**

In these categories, paragraph E2 (b) – (e) above shall be amended so that where no maker or artist is identified, the **authenticity warranty** is given not only for the **Heading** but also for information regarding date or period shown in **UPPERCASE type** in the second line of the **catalogue description** (the "**SubHeading**"). Accordingly, all references to the **Heading** in paragraph E2 (b) – (e) above shall be read as references to both the **Heading** and the **SubHeading**.

3 • YOUR WARRANTIES

(a) You **warrant** that the funds used for settlement are not connected with any criminal activity, including tax evasion, and you are neither under investigation, nor have you been charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other crimes.

(b) Where you are bidding as agent on behalf of any ultimate buyer(s) who will put you in funds before you pay Christie's for the **lot**(s), you **warrant** that:
(i) you have conducted appropriate customer due diligence on the ultimate buyer(s) and have complied with all applicable anti-money laundering, counter terrorist financing and sanctions laws;
(ii) you will disclose to us the identity of the ultimate buyer(s) (including any officers and beneficial owner(s) of the ultimate buyer(s) and any persons acting on its behalf) and on our request, provide documents to verify their identity;
(iii) the arrangements between you and the ultimate buyer(s) in relation to the **lot** or otherwise do not, in whole or in part, facilitate tax crimes;
(iv) you do not know, and have no reason to suspect that the ultimate buyer(s) (or its officers, beneficial owners or any persons acting on its behalf) are on a sanctions list, are under investigation for, charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other crimes, or that the funds used for settlement are connected with the proceeds of any criminal activity, including tax evasion; and
(v) where you are a regulated person who is supervised for anti-money laundering purposes under the laws of the EEA or another jurisdiction with requirements equivalent to the EU 4th Money Laundering Directive, and we do not request documents to verify the ultimate buyer's identity at the time of registration, you consent to us relying on your due diligence on the ultimate buyer, and will retain their identification and verification documents for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of the transaction. You will make such documentation available for immediate inspection on our request.

F • PAYMENT

1 • HOW TO PAY

(a) Immediately following the auction, you must pay the **purchase price** being:
(i) the **hammer price**; and
(ii) the **buyer's premium**; and
(iii) any amounts due under section D3 above; and
(iv) any duties, goods, sales, use, compensating or service tax or VAT.

Payment is due no later than by the end of the seventh calendar day following the date of the auction, or no later than 24 hours after we issue you with an invoice in the case of payment made in cryptocurrency, as the case may be (the '**due date'**).

(b) We will only accept payment from the registered bidder. Once issued, we cannot change the buyer's name on an invoice or re-issue the invoice in a different name. You must pay immediately even if you want to export the **lot** and you need an export licence.

(c) You must pay for **lots** bought at Christie's in the United Kingdom in the currency stated on the invoice in one of the following ways:

(i) **Wire transfer**

You must make payments to:
Lloyds Bank Plc, City Office, PO Box 217, 72 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BT. Account number: 00172710, sort code: 30-00-02 Swift code: LOYDGB2LCTY. IBAN (international bank account number): GB81 LOYD 3000 0200 1727 10.

(ii) **Credit Card**

We accept most major credit cards subject to certain conditions. You may make payment via credit card in person. You may also make a 'cardholder not present' (CNP) payment by calling Christie's Post-Sale Services Department on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or for some sales, by logging into your MyChristie's account by going to: www.christies.com/mychristies. Details of the conditions and restrictions applicable to credit card payments are available from our Post-Sale Services Department, whose details are set out in paragraph (e) below.

If you pay for your purchase using a credit card issued outside the region of the sale, depending on the type of credit card and account you hold, the payment may incur a cross-border transaction fee. If you think this may apply to, you, please check with your credit card issuer before making the payment.

Please note that for sales that permit online payment, certain transactions will be ineligible for credit card payment.

(iii) **Cash**

We do not accept cash in England.

(iv) **Banker's draft**

You must make these payable to Christie's and there may be conditions.

(v) **Cheque**

You must make cheques payable to Christie's. Cheques must be from accounts in pounds sterling (**GBP**) from a United Kingdom bank.

(vi) **Cryptocurrency**

With the exception of clients resident in Mainland China, payment for a **lot** marked with the symbol ❖ may be made in a cryptocurrency or cryptocurrencies of our choosing. Such cryptocurrency payments must be made in accordance with the **Terms for Payment by Buyers in Cryptocurrency** set out at Appendix B in these Conditions of Sale.

(d) You must quote the sale number, **lot** number(s), your invoice number and Christie's client account number when making a payment. All payments sent by post must be sent to: Christie's, Cashiers Department, 8 King Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6QT.

(e) For more information please contact our Post-Sale Service Department by phone on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or fax on +44 (0)20 752 3300.

2 • TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP TO YOU

You will not own the **lot** and ownership of the **lot** will not pass to you until we have received full and clear payment of the **purchase price**, even in circumstances where we have released the **lot** to the buyer.

3 • TRANSFERRING RISK TO YOU

The risk in and responsibility for the **lot** will transfer to you from whichever is the earlier of the following:

(a) When you collect the **lot**; or

(b) At the end of the 30th day following the date of the auction or, if earlier, the date the **lot** is taken into care by a third-party warehouse as set out on the page headed 'Storage and Collection', unless we have agreed otherwise with you in writing.

4 • WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT PAY

(a) If you fail to pay us the **purchase price** in full by the **due date**, we will be entitled to do one or more of the following (as well as enforce our rights under paragraph F5 and any other rights or remedies we have by law):
(i) to charge interest from the **due date** at a rate of 5% a year above the UK Lloyds Bank base rate from time to time on the unpaid amount due;
(ii) we can cancel the sale of the **lot**. If we do this, we may sell the **lot** again, publicly or privately on such terms we shall think necessary or appropriate, in which case you must pay us any shortfall between the **purchase price** and the proceeds from the resale. You must also pay all costs, expenses, losses, damages and legal fees we have to pay or may suffer and any shortfall in the seller's commission on the resale;
(iii) we can pay the seller an amount up to the net proceeds payable in respect of the amount bid by your default in which case you acknowledge and understand that Christie's will have all of the rights of the seller to pursue you for such amounts;
(iv) we can hold you legally responsible for the **purchase price** and may begin legal proceedings to recover it together with other losses, interest, legal fees and costs as far as we are allowed by law;
(v) we can take what you owe us from any amounts which we or any company in the **Christie's Group** may owe you (including any deposit or other part-payment which you have paid to us);
(vi) we can, at our option, reveal your identity and contact details to the seller;
(vii) we can reject at any future auction any bids made by or on behalf of the buyer or to obtain a deposit from the buyer before accepting any bids;
(viii) to exercise all the rights and remedies of a person holding security over any property in our possession owned by you, whether by way of pledge, security interest or in any other way as permitted by the law of the place where such property is located. You will be deemed to have granted such security to us and we may retain such property as collateral security for your obligations to us; and
(ix) we can take any other action we see necessary or appropriate.

(b) If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, we can use any amount you do pay, including any deposit or other part-payment you have made to us, or which we owe you, to pay off any amount you owe to us or another **Christie's Group** company for any transaction.

(c) If you make payment in full after the due date, and we choose to accept such payment we may charge you storage and transport costs from the date that is ninety (90) calendar days following the auction in accordance with paragraphs Gc and Gd.

5 • KEEPING YOUR PROPERTY

If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, as well as the rights set out in F4 above, we can use or deal with any of your property we hold or which is held by another **Christie's Group** company in any way we are allowed to by law. We will only release your property to you after you pay us or the relevant **Christie's Group** company in full for what you owe.

However, if we choose, we can also sell your property in any way we think appropriate. We will use the proceeds of the sale against any amounts you owe us and we will pay any amount left from that sale to you. If there is a shortfall, you must pay us any difference between the amount we have received from the sale and the amount you owe us.

G • COLLECTION AND STORAGE

(a) You must collect purchased **lots** within thirty (30) days from the auction (but note that **lots** will not be released to you until you have made full and clear payment of all amounts due to us).

(b) If you do not collect any **lot** within ninety (90) days following the auction we can, at our option:
(i) charge you storage costs at the rates set out at www.christies.com/en/help/buying-guide/storage-fees.
(ii) move the **lot** to another Christie's location or an affiliate or third party warehouse and charge you transport costs and administration fees for doing so and you will be subject to the third party storage warehouse's standard terms and to pay for their standard fees and costs.use's standard terms and to pay for their standard fees and costs.
(iii) sell the **lot** in any commercially reasonable way we think appropriate.

(c) The Storage Conditions which can be found at www.christies.com/en/help/buying-guide/storage-conditions will apply.

(d) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit our rights under paragraph F4.

H • TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

1 • TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

We will enclose a transport and shipping form with each invoice sent to you. You must make all transport and shipping arrangements. However, we can arrange to pack, transport and ship your property if you ask us to and pay the costs of doing so. We recommend that you ask us for an **estimate**, especially for any large items or items of high value that need professional packing before you bid. We may also suggest other handlers, packers, transporters or experts if you ask us to do so. For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at arttransportlondon@christies.com. We will take reasonable care when we are handling, packing, transporting and shipping a **lot**. However, if we recommend another company for any of these purposes, we are not responsible for their acts, failure to act or neglect.

2 • EXPORT AND IMPORT

Any **lot** sold at auction may be affected by laws on exports from the country in which it is sold and the import restrictions of other countries. Many countries require a declaration of export for property leaving the country and/or an import declaration on entry of property into the country. Local laws may prevent you from importing a **lot** or may prevent you selling a **lot** in the country you import it into. We will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price** if your **lot** may not be exported, imported or it is seized for any reason by a government authority. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy the requirements of any applicable laws or regulations relating to the export or import of any **lot** you purchase.

(a) You alone are responsible for getting advice about and meeting the requirements of any laws or regulations which apply to exporting or importing any **lot** prior to bidding. If you are refused a licence or there is a delay in getting one, you must still pay us in full for the **lot**. We may be able to help you apply for the appropriate licences if you ask us to and pay our fee for doing so. However, we cannot guarantee that you will get one. For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at arttransport_ london@christies.com.

(b) You alone are responsible for any applicable taxes, tariffs or other government-imposed charges relating to the export or import of the **lot**. If Christie's exports or imports the **lot** on your behalf, and if Christie's pays these applicable taxes, tariffs or other government-imposed charges, you agree to refund that amount to Christie's.

(c) **Lots made of protected species**
Lots made of or including (regardless of the percentage) endangered and other protected species of wildlife are marked with the symbol ~ in the catalogue. This material includes, among other things, ivory, tortoiseshell, crocodile skin, rhinoceros horn, whalebone, certain species of coral, and Brazilian rosewood. You should check the relevant customs laws and regulations before bidding on any **lot** containing wildlife material if you plan to export the **lot** from the country in which the **lot** is sold and import it into another country as a licence may be required. In some cases, the **lot** can only be shipped with an independent scientific confirmation of species and/or age, and you will need to obtain these at your own cost. Several countries have imposed restrictions on dealing in elephant ivory, ranging from a total ban on importing African elephant ivory in the United States to importing, exporting and selling under strict measures in other countries. The UK and EU have both implemented regulations on selling, exporting and importing elephant ivory. In our London sales, lots made of or including elephant ivory material are marked with the symbol ∝ and are offered with the benefit of being registered as 'exempt' in accordance with the UK Ivory Act. Handbags containing endangered or protected species material are marked with the symbol ≈ and further information can be found in paragraph H2(h) below. We will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price** if your **lot** may not be exported, imported or it is seized for any reason by a government authority. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy the requirements of any applicable laws or regulations relating to the export or import of property containing such protected or regulated material.

(d) **Lots of Iranian origin**
As a convenience to buyers, Christie's indicates under the title of a **lot** if the **lot** originates from Iran (Persia). Some countries prohibit or restrict the purchase and/or import of Iranian-origin property. It is your responsibility to ensure you do not bid on or import a **lot** in contravention of any sanctions, trade embargoes or other laws that apply to you. For example, the USA prohibits dealings in and import of Iranian-origin "works of conventional craftsmanship" (such as carpets, textiles, decorative objects, and scientific instruments) without an appropriate licence. Christie's has a general OFAC licence which, subject to compliance with certain conditions, may enable a buyer to import this type of lot into the USA. If you use Christie's general OFAC licence for this purpose, you agree to comply with the licence conditions and provide Christie's with all relevant information. You also acknowledge that Christie's will disclose your personal information and your use of the licence to OFAC.

(e) **Gold**
Gold of less than 18ct does not qualify in all countries as 'gold' and may be refused import into those countries as 'gold'.

(f) **Jewellery over 50 years old**
Under current laws, jewellery over 50 years old which is worth £39,219 or more will require an export licence which we can apply for on your behalf. It may take up to eight weeks to obtain the export jewellery licence.

(g) **Watches**
Many of the watches offered for sale in this catalogue are pictured with straps made of endangered or protected animal materials such as alligator or crocodile. These **lots** are marked with the symbol Ψ in the catalogue. These endangered species straps are shown for display purposes only and are not for sale. Christie's will remove and retain the strap prior to shipment from the sale site. At some sale sites, Christie's may, at its discretion, make the displayed endangered species strap available to the buyer of the **lot** free of charge if collected in person from the sale site within one year of the date of the sale. Please check with the department for details on a particular **lot**. For all symbols and other markings referred to in paragraph H2, please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you, but we do not accept liability for errors or for failing to mark **lots**.

(h) **Handbags**
A **lot** marked with the symbol ≈ next to the **lot** number includes endangered or protected species material and is subject to CITES regulations. This **lot** may only be shipped to an address within the country of the sale site or personally picked up from our saleroom. The term "hardware" refers to the metallic parts of the handbag, such as the buckle hardware, base studs, lock and keys and/or strap, which are plated with a coloured finish (e.g. gold, silver, palladium). The terms "Gold Hardware", "Silver Hardware", "Palladium Hardware", etc. refer to the tone or colour of the hardware and not the actual material used. If the handbag incorporates solid metal hardware, this will be referenced in the catalogue description.

I • OUR LIABILITY TO YOU

(a) We give no **warranty** in relation to any statement made, or information given, by us or our representatives or employees, about any **lot** other than as set out in the **authenticity warranty** and, as far as we are allowed by law, all **warranties** and other terms which may be added to this agreement by law are excluded. The seller's **warranties** contained in paragraph E1 are their own and we do not have any liability to you in relation to those **warranties**.

(b) (i) We are not responsible to you for any reason (whether for breaking this agreement or any other matter relating to your purchase of, or bid for, any **lot**) other than in the event of fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation by us or other than as expressly set out in these Conditions of Sale; or (ii) we do not give any representation, **warranty** or guarantee or assume any liability of any kind in respect of any **lot** with regard to merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, description, size, quality, **condition**, attribution, authenticity, rarity, importance, medium, **provenance**, exhibition history, literature, or historical relevance. Except as required by local law, any **warranty** of any kind is excluded by this paragraph.

(c) In particular, please be aware that our written and telephone bidding services, Christie's LIVE™, **condition** reports, currency converter and saleroom video screens are free services and we are not responsible to you for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in these services.

(d) We have no responsibility to any person other than a buyer in connection with the purchase of any **lot**.

(e) If, in spite of the terms in paragraphs (a) to (d) or E2(i) above, we are found to be liable to you for any reason, we shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, or expenses.

J • OTHER TERMS

1 • OUR ABILITY TO CANCEL

In addition to the other rights of cancellation contained in this agreement, we can cancel a sale of a **lot** if: (i) any of your **warranties** in paragraph E3 are not correct; (ii) we reasonably believe that completing the transaction is or may be unlawful; or (iii) we reasonably believe that the sale places us or the seller under any liability to anyone else or may damage our reputation.

2 • RECORDINGS

We may videotape and record proceedings at any auction. We will keep any personal information confidential, except to the extent disclosure is required by law. However, we may, through this process, use or share these recordings with another **Christie's Group** company and marketing partners to analyse our customers and to help us to tailor our services for buyers. If you do not want to be videotaped, you may make arrangements to make a telephone or written bid or bid on Christie's LIVE™ instead. Unless we agree otherwise in writing, you may not videotape or record proceedings at any auction.

3 • COPYRIGHT

We own the copyright in all images, illustrations and written material produced by or for us relating to a **lot** (including the contents of our catalogues unless otherwise noted in the catalogue). You cannot use them without our prior written permission. We do not offer any guarantee that you will gain any copyright or other reproduction rights to the **lot**.

4 • ENFORCING THIS AGREEMENT

If a court finds that any part of this agreement is not valid or is illegal or impossible to enforce, that part of the agreement will be treated as being deleted and the rest of this agreement will not be affected.

5 • TRANSFERRING YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

You may not grant a security over or transfer your rights or responsibilities under these terms on the contract of sale with the buyer unless we have given our written permission. This agreement will be binding on your successors or estate and anyone who takes over your rights and responsibilities.

6 • TRANSLATIONS

If we have provided a translation of this agreement, we will use this original version in deciding any issues or disputes which arise under this agreement.

7 • PERSONAL INFORMATION

We will hold and process your personal information and may pass it to another **Christie's Group** company for use as described in, and in line with, our privacy notice at www.christies.com/about-us/contact/privacy and if you are a resident of California you can see a copy of our California Consumer Privacy Act statement at https://www.christies.com/about-us/contact/ccpa.

8 • WAIVER

No failure or delay to exercise any right or remedy provided under these Conditions of Sale shall constitute a waiver of that or any other right or remedy, nor shall it prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy. No single or partial exercise of such right or remedy shall prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy.

9 • LAW AND DISPUTES

This agreement, and any contractual or non-contractual dispute arising out of or in connection with this agreement, will be governed by English law. Before either you or we start any court proceedings and if you and we agree, you and we will try to settle the dispute by mediation in accordance with the CEDR Model Mediation Procedure. If the dispute is not settled by mediation, you agree for our benefit that the dispute will be referred to and dealt with exclusively in the English courts; however, we will have the right to bring proceedings against you in any other court.

10 • REPORTING ON WWW.CHRISTIES.COM

Details of all **lots** sold by us, including catalogue descriptions and prices, may be reported on www.christies.com. Sales totals are **hammer price** plus **buyer's premium** and do not reflect costs, financing fees, or application of buyer's or seller's credits. We regret that we cannot agree to requests to remove these details from www.christies.com.

K • GLOSSARY

auctioneer: the individual auctioneer and/or Christie's.
authentic: a genuine example, rather than a copy or forgery of:
(i) the work of a particular artist, author or manufacturer, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as the work of that artist, author or manufacturer;
(ii) a work created within a particular period or culture, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as a work created during that period or culture;
(iii) a work for a particular origin source if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as being of that origin or source; or
(iv) in the case of gems, a work which is made of a particular material, if the **lot** is described in the
Heading as being made of that material.
authenticity warranty: the guarantee we give in this agreement that a **lot** is **authentic** as set out in section E2 of this agreement.
buyer's premium: the charge the buyer pays us along with the **hammer price**.
catalogue description: the description of a **lot** in the catalogue for the auction, as amended by any **saleroom notice**.
Christie's Group: Christie's International Plc, its subsidiaries and other companies within its corporate group.
condition: the physical condition of a **lot**.
due date: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).
estimate: the price range included in the catalogue or any **saleroom notice** within which we believe a **lot** may sell. **Low estimate** means the lower figure in the range and **high estimate** means the higher figure. The **mid estimate** is the midpoint between the two.
hammer price: the amount of the highest bid the **auctioneer** accepts for the sale of a **lot**.
Heading: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2.
SubHeading: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2.
lot: an item to be offered at auction (or two or more items to be offered at auction as a group).
other damages: any special, consequential, incidental or indirect damages of any kind or any damages which fall within the meaning of 'special', 'incidental' or 'consequential' under local law.
purchase price: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).
provenance: the ownership history of a **lot**.
qualified: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2 and **Qualified Headings** means the section headed **Qualified Headings** on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'.
reserve: the confidential amount below which we will not sell a **lot**.
saleroom notice: a written notice posted next to the **lot** in the saleroom and on www.christies.com, which is also read to prospective telephone bidders and notified to clients who have left commission bids, or an announcement made by the **auctioneer** either at the beginning of the sale, or before a particular **lot** is auctioned.
UPPER CASE type: means having all capital letters.
warranty: a statement or representation in which the person making it guarantees that the facts set out in it are correct.

VAT SYMBOLS AND EXPLANATION (FOR ALL LOTS EXCLUDING NFTS)

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The VAT liability in force on the date of the sale will be the rules under which we invoice you.
You can find the meanings of words in bold on this page in the glossary section of the Conditions of Sale.

VAT PAYABLE

Symbol	
No Symbol	We will use the VAT Margin Scheme in accordance with Section 50A of the VAT Act 1994 & SI VAT (Special Provisions) Order 1995. No VAT will be charged on the **hammer price**. VAT at 20% will be added to the **buyer's premium** but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
† θ	We will invoice under standard VAT rules and VAT will be charged at 20% on both the **hammer price** and **buyer's premium** and shown separately on our invoice. For qualifying books only, no VAT is payable on the **hammer price** or the **buyer's premium**.
*	These **lots** have been imported from outside the UK for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Import VAT is payable at 5% on the **hammer price**. VAT at 20% will be added to the **buyer's premium** but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
Ω	These **lots** have been imported from outside the UK for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Customs Duty as applicable will be added to the **hammer price** and Import VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty Inclusive **hammer price**. VAT at 20% will be added to the **buyer's premium** but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
α	The VAT treatment will depend on whether you have registered to bid with a UK address or non-UK address: • If you register to bid with an address within the UK you will be invoiced under the VAT Margin Scheme (see No Symbol above). • If you register to bid with an address outside of the UK you will be invoiced under standard VAT rules (see † symbol above)
‡	For wine offered 'in bond' only. If you choose to buy the wine in bond no Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the **hammer**. If you choose to buy the wine out of bond Excise Duty as applicable will be added to the **hammer price** and Clearance VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty inclusive **hammer price**. Whether you buy the wine in bond or out of bond, 20% VAT will be added to the **buyer's premium** and shown on the invoice.

VAT refunds: what can I reclaim?

Non-UK buyer		If you meet ALL of the conditions in notes 1 to 3 below we will refund the following tax charges:
	No symbol	We will refund the VAT amount in the **buyer's premium**.
	† and α	We will refund the VAT charged on the **hammer price**. VAT on the buyer's premium can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the **buyer's premium** cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	‡ (wine only)	No Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the **hammer price** providing you export the wine while 'in bond' directly outside the UK using an Excise authorised shipper. VAT on the **buyer's premium** can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the **buyer's premium** cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	* and Ω	We will refund the Import VAT charged on the **hammer price** and the VAT amount in the **buyer's premium**.

1. We CANNOT offer refunds of VAT amounts or Import VAT to buyers who do not meet all applicable conditions in full. If you are unsure whether you will be entitled to a refund, please contact Client Services at the address below before you bid.
2. No VAT amounts or Import VAT will be refunded where the total refund is under £100.
3. To receive a refund of VAT amounts/Import VAT (as applicable) a non-UK buyer must:
   a) have registered to bid with an address outside of the UK; and
   b) provide immediate proof of correct export out of the UK within the required time frames of 90 days from the date of the sale. Lots purchased with the * and Ω symbol must be exported via a 'controlled export'.
4. Details of the documents which you must provide to us to show satisfactory proof of export/shipping are available from our VAT team at the address below. We charge a processing fee of £35.00 per invoice to check shipping/export documents. We will waive this processing fee if you appoint Christie's Shipping Department to arrange your export/shipping.
5. Following the UK's departure from the EU (Brexit), private buyers will only be able to secure VAT-free invoicing and/or VAT refunds if they instruct Christie's or a third party commercial shipper to export out of the UK on their behalf.
6. Private buyers who choose to export their purchased lots from the UK hand carry will now be charged VAT at the applicable rate and will not be able to claim a VAT refund.
7. If you appoint Christie's Art Transport or one of our authorised shippers to arrange your export/shipping we will issue you with an export invoice with the applicable VAT or duties cancelled as outlined above. If you later cancel or change the shipment in a manner that infringes the rules outlined above we will issue a revised invoice charging you all applicable taxes/charges. If you export via a third party commercial shipper, you must provide us with sufficient proof of export in order for us to cancel the applicable VAT or duties outlined above.
8. If you ask us to re-invoice you under normal UK VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a † symbol) instead of under the Margin Scheme the lot may become ineligible to be resold using the Margin Schemes. You should take professional advice if you are unsure how this may affect you.
9. All reinvoicing requests, corrections, or other VAT adjustments must be received within four years from the date of sale.

   If you have any questions about VAT refunds please contact Christie's Client Services on info@christies.com

   Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2886.

   Fax: +44 (0)20 7839 1611.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

No part of this catalogue may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted by any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Christie's.
© COPYRIGHT, CHRISTIE, MANSON & WOODS LTD. (2025)

SYMBOLS USED IN THIS CATALOGUE

The meaning of words coloured in bold in this section can be found in paragraph K, Glossary, of the section of the catalogue headed 'Conditions of Sale'.

º

Christie's has a direct financial interest in the **lot**. See Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

º ♦

Christie's has provided a minimum price guarantee and has a direct financial interest in this lot. Christie's has financed all or a part of such interest through a third party. Such third parties generally benefit financially if a guaranteed lot is sold. See the Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

Δ

Christie's has a financial interest in the **lot**. See Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

Δ♦

Christie's has a financial interest in this **lot** and has financed all or a part of such interest through a third party. Such third parties generally benefit financially if a guaranteed **lot** is sold. See the Important Notices in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

¤

A party with a direct or indirect interest in the **lot** who may have knowledge of the **lot's reserve** or other material information may be bidding on the **lot**.

λ

Artist's Resale Right. See paragraph D3 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

•

Lot offered without **reserve**.

~

Lot incorporates material from endangered species which could result in export restrictions. See paragraph H2(c) of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

≈

Handbag **lot** incorporates material from endangered species. International shipping restrictions apply. See paragraph H2 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

∝

Lot incorporates elephant ivory material. See paragraph H2 of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

ψ

Lot incorporates material from endangered species which is shown for display purposes only and is not for sale. See paragraph H2(h) of the Conditions of Sale for further information.

➤

Lot is a Non Fungible Token (NFT). Please see Appendix A – Additional Conditions of Sale – Non- Fungible Tokens in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

◗

Lot contains both a Non Fungible Token (NFT) and a physical work of art. Please see Appendix A – Additional Conditions of Sale – Non-Fungible Tokens in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

❖

With the exception of clients resident in Mainland China, you may elect to make payment of the purchase price for the **lot** via a digital wallet in the name of the registered bidder, which must be maintained with one of the following: Coinbase Custody Trust; Coinbase, Inc.; Fidelity Digital Assets Services, LLC; Gemini Trust Company, LLC; or Paxos Trust Company, LLC. Please see the lot notice and Appendix B – Terms for Payment by Buyers in Cryptocurrency in the Conditions of Sale for further requirements and information.

†, Θ, ⁎, Ω, α, ‡

See VAT Symbols and Explanation in the Conditions of Sale for further information.

■ See Storage and Collection Page.

Please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you and we shall not be liable for any errors in, or failure to, mark a **lot**.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

CHRISTIE'S INTEREST IN PROPERTY CONSIGNED FOR AUCTION

Δ Property in which Christie's has an ownership or financial interest

From time to time, Christie's may offer a **lot** in which Christie's has an ownership interest or a financial interest. Such **lot** is identified in the catalogue with the symbol Δ next to its **lot** number. Where Christie's has an ownership or financial interest in every **lot** in the catalogue, Christie's will not designate each **lot** with a symbol, but will state its interest in the front of the catalogue.

º Minimum Price Guarantees

On occasion, Christie's has a direct financial interest in the outcome of the sale of certain **lot**s consigned for sale. This will usually be where it has guaranteed to the Seller that whatever the outcome of the auction, the Seller will receive a minimum sale price for the **lot**. This is known as a minimum price guarantee. Where Christie's holds such financial interest, we identify such **lot**s with the symbol ° next to the **lot** number.

º♦ Third Party Guarantees/Irrevocable bids

Where Christie's has provided a Minimum Price Guarantee, it is at risk of making a loss, which can be significant if the **lot** fails to sell. Christie's therefore sometimes chooses to share that risk with a third party who agrees, prior to the auction, to place an irrevocable written bid on the **lot**. If there are no other higher bids, the third party commits to buy the **lot** at the level of their irrevocable written bid. In doing so, the third party takes on all or part of the risk of the **lot** not being sold. **Lot**s which are subject to a third party guarantee arrangement are identified in the catalogue with the symbol º♦.

In most cases, Christie's compensates the third party in exchange for accepting this risk. Where the third party is the successful bidder, the third party's remuneration is based on a fixed financing fee. If the third party is not the successful bidder, the remuneration may either be based on a fixed fee or an amount calculated against the final **hammer price**. The third party may also bid for the **lot** above the irrevocable written bid.

Third party guarantors are required by us to disclose to anyone they are advising their financial interest in any **lot**s they are guaranteeing. However, for the avoidance of any doubt, if you are advised by or bidding through an agent on a **lot** identified as being subject to a third party guarantee you should always ask your agent to confirm whether or not they have a financial interest in relation to the **lot**.

Δ♦ Property in which Christie's has an interest and Third Party Guarantee/Irrevocable bid

Where Christie's has a financial interest in a **lot** and the **lot** fails to sell, Christie's is at risk of making a loss. As such, Christie's may choose to share that risk with a third party whereby the third party contractually agrees, prior to the auction, to place an irrevocable written bid on the **lot**. Such lot is identified with the symbol Δ♦ next to the **lot** number. Where the third party is the successful bidder on the **lot**, they will not receive compensation in exchange for accepting this risk. If the third party is not the successful bidder, Christie's may compensate the third party. The third party is required by us to disclose to anyone they are advising of their financial interest in any **lot** in which Christie's has a financial interest. If you are advised by or bidding through an agent on a **lot** in which Christie's has a financial interest that is subject to a contractual written bid, you should always ask your agent to confirm whether or not they have a financial interest in relation to the **lot**.

¤ Bidding by parties with an interest

When a party with a direct or indirect interest in the **lot** who may have knowledge of the **lot's reserve** or other material information may be bidding on the **lot**, we will mark the lot with this symbol ¤. This interest can include beneficiaries of an estate that consigned the **lot** or a joint owner of a **lot**. Any interested party that successfully bids on a **lot** must comply with Christie's Conditions of Sale, including paying the **lot**'s full **buyer's premium** plus applicable taxes.

Post-catalogue notifications

If Christie's enters into an arrangement or becomes aware of bidding that would have required a catalogue symbol, we will notify you by updating christies.com with the relevant information (time permitting) or otherwise by a pre-sale or pre-**lot** announcement.

Other Arrangements

Christie's may enter into other arrangements not involving bids. These include arrangements where Christie's has advanced money to consignors or prospective purchasers or where Christie's has shared the risk of a guarantee with a partner without the partner being required to place an irrevocable written bid or otherwise participating in the bidding on the lot. Because such arrangements are unrelated to the bidding process they are not marked with a symbol in the catalogue.

Please see: http://www.christies.com/ financial-interest/ for a more detailed explanation of minimum price guarantees and third party financing arrangements.

EXPLANATION OF CATALOGUING PRACTICE

Terms used in a catalogue or **lot** description have the meanings ascribed to them below. Please note that all statements in a catalogue or **lot** description as to authorship are made subject to the provisions of the Conditions of Sale, including the **authenticity warranty**. Our use of these expressions does not take account of the **condition** of the **lot** or of the extent of any restoration. Written **condition** reports are usually available on request.

A term and its definition listed under '**Qualified Headings**' is a **qualified** statement as to authorship. While the use of this term is based upon careful study and represents the opinion of specialists, Christie's and the consignor assume no risk, liability and responsibility for the **authentic**ity of authorship of any **lot** in this catalogue described by this term, and the **authenticity warranty** shall not be available with respect to **lot**s described using this term.

PICTURES, DRAWINGS, PRINTS, MINIATURES AND SCULPTURE

Name(s) or Recognised Designation of an artist without any qualification: in Christie's opinion a work by the artist.

QUALIFIED HEADINGS

"**Attributed to**…": in Christie's **qualified** opinion probably a work by the artist in whole or in part.

"**Studio of …"/"Workshop of** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the studio or workshop of the artist, possibly under their supervision.

"**Circle of** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work of the period of the artist and showing their influence.

"**Follower of** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the artist's style but not necessarily by a pupil.

"**Manner of** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a work executed in the artist's style but of a later date.

"**After** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion a copy (of any date) of a work of the artist.

"S**igned** …"/"**Dated** …"/ "**Inscribed** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion the work has been signed/dated/inscribed by the artist.

"**With signature** …"/"**With date** …"/ "**With inscription** …": in Christie's **qualified** opinion the signature/ date/inscription appears to be by a hand other than that of the artist.

The date given for Old Master, Modern and Contemporary Prints is the date (or approximate date when prefixed with 'circa') on which the matrix was worked and not necessarily the date when the impression was printed or published.

STORAGE AND COLLECTION

COLLECTION LOCATION AND TERMS

Specified **lots** (sold and unsold) marked with a filled square (■) not collected from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1Y 6QT by 5.00pm on the day of the sale will, at our option, be removed to Crozier Park Royal (details below). Christie's will inform you if the **lot** has been sent offsite.

If the **lot** is transferred to Crozier Park Royal, it will be available for collection from 12.00pm on the second business day following the sale.

Please call Christie's Client Service 24 hours in advance to book a collection time at Crozier Park Royal. All collections from Crozier Park Royal will be by pre-booked **appointment only**.

Tel: +44 (0)20 7839 9060
Email: cscollectionsuk@christies.com.

If the **lot** remains at Christie's, 8 King Street, it will be available for collection on any working day (not weekends) from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

COLLECTION AND CONTACT DETAILS

Lots will only be released on payment of all charges due and on production of a **Collection Form** from Christie's. Charges may be paid in advance or at the time of collection. We may charge fees for storage if your **lot** is not collected within thirty days from the sale. Please see paragraph G of the Conditions of Sale for further detail.

Tel: +44 (0)20 7839 9060
Email: cscollectionsuk@christies.com

SHIPPING AND DELIVERY

Christie's Post-Sale Service can organise local deliveries or international freight. Please contact them on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or PostSaleUK@christies.com.

CROZIER PARK ROYAL

Unit 7, Central Park
Central Way
London NW10 7FY

Vehicle access via Central Way only, off Acton Lane.

COLLECTION FROM CROZIER PARK ROYAL

Please note that the opening hours for Crozier Park Royal are Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm and lots transferred are not available for collection at weekends.

CHRISTIE'S

Identity Verification

Anti-money laundering regulations require Christie's and other art businesses to verify the identity of all clients. To register as a new client, you will need to provide the following documents, or if you are an existing client, you will be prompted to provide any outstanding documents the next time you transact.

Private Individuals

- A copy of your passport or other government-issued photo ID.
- Proof of your residential address (such as a bank statement or utility bill) dated within the last three months.

Please upload your documents through your christies.com account: click 'My Account' followed by 'Complete Profile'. You can also email your documents to info@christies.com or provide them in person.

Organisations

- Formal documents showing the company's incorporation, its registered office and business address, and its officers, members and ultimate beneficial owners.
- A passport or other government issued photo ID for each beneficial owner and authorised user.

Please email your documents to info@christies.com or provide them in person.

CHRISTIE'S

Our Sustainability Pledge

Christie's is printing fewer catalogues as our business and client needs evolve. When we do print, we uphold the highest sustainable standards. Our catalogues are printed on fully recycled paper, with vegetable-based ink and biodegradable laminates.

'Five years ago we made a decision to create a more sustainable future for Christie's. With a 69% reduction in our carbon emissions since 2019, we have shown it is possible and in doing so have driven change in the art market. Art is a source of personal joy and enrichment and that should not come at the expense of the environment.'

Bonnie Brennan
Chief Executive Officer

Scan to learn
more about our
sustainability
goals and projects

VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853-1890)
Coin de jardin avec papillons
Price realised: $33,185,000
Christie's New York, May 2024

To opt out of receiving future Christie's catalogues, please email info@christies.com

GCC 20 24

SCIENCE
BASED
TARGETS
DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

CHRISTIE'S

Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds including Rugs and Carpets

London | 30 October 2025

EXHIBITION
25–29 October 2025
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT
Phoebe Jowett Smith
pjowettsmith@christies.com
+44 (0)20 7752 3221

A LARGE AND IMPRESSIVE COTTON TENT WALL (QANAT)
PROBABLY JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA, PROBABLY 19TH CENTURY
37ft.10in. x 13ft.2in. (1154 × 402cm.)
£150,000-£250,000

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price.
See Section D of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

christies.com

CHRISTIE'S

8 KING STREET ST. JAMES'S LONDON SW1Y 6QT